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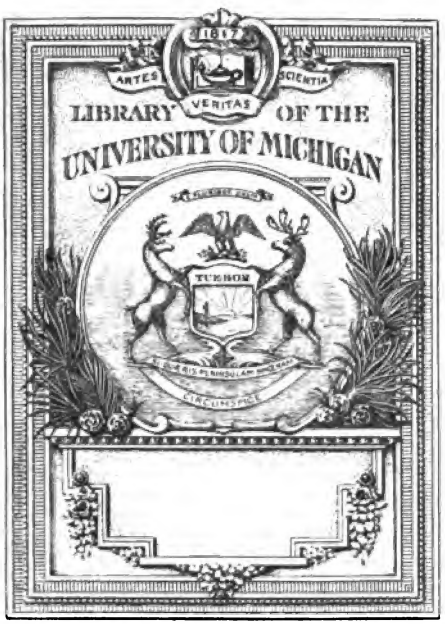
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SPECIMENS

OF

EARLY ENGLISH METRICAL

ROMANCES,

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

AN HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION,

ON THE

RISE AND PROGRESS OF ROMANTIC COMPOSITION IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

BY

GEORGE ELLIS, ESQ.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED BY

J. O. HALLIWELL, ESQ., F.R.S.

LONDON:

HENRY G. BOHN, YORK STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

MDCCCXLVIII.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY T. R. HARRISON,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

821.2
E47s
K8
cop. 4

PREFACE.

E sources of enjoyment contained in our early literature not unfrequently obscured, or altogether concealed, by thick veil spread over them by learned affectation. The nmentator smothers the author whom he designed to usher o the world. But sometimes the difficulty consists in niliarizing to one generation the thoughts and language of ther long passed away. Antiquaries have often mis-en the means of surmounting these obstacles, and instead lluring the general reader to studies on which they them-es set so high a value, by multiplying and smoothing the nues leading to them, have augmented the embarrassments viously existing. But though sometimes wanting the l to recommend, they have seldom been destitute of the ver to appreciate our early writers, whose merit is indeed great, that, whoever possesses the industry to conquer their ning, must inevitably be charmed by the truth and vita- of their pictures, the ingenuous frankness of their senti-nts, the force and simplicity of their language, and the yancy and joyousness of their general character. It was sequently with unmixed feelings of pleasure that the lovers genuine poetry witnessed the appearance of the "Specimens Early English Metrical Romances," edited by George Ellis, , to borrow the language of Sir Walter Scott, "trans-ed all the playful fascinations of a humour, as delightful t was uncommon, into the forgotten poetry of the ancient strels, and gave life and popularity to compositions which till then been buried in the closet of the antiquary."

t is, indeed, difficult to estimate too highly the services ich Ellis rendered to literature by the publication of this k. The interminable ballad romances of the middle ages daunted all but the few initiated; but then, as if by

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magic, they became the friends and companions of thousands. Ellis, in fact, did for ancient romance what Percy had previously accomplished for early poetry; and if his labours are somewhat less known than those of the learned Prelate, the reason must be sought in the costly form in which his work has hitherto been circulated. "Breathes there a man with soul so dead" as not to feel some interest in the romantic details which once awakened enthusiasm in the hearts of the knight, the prince, and the peasant, and were welcomed alike by warrior in the field and "bird* in the bower?" Our country almost ceases to be merry England without its ballads and its romances.

In the present edition, care has been taken not to diminish the popular character of the work by an unnecessary exhibition of archæological learning. It has been considered sufficient to amend silently the various philological errors into which Ellis had fallen, without pointing them out to special attention, and the editorial additions and corrections will tend, it is believed, to facilitate the reader's progress, without distracting his attention.

July, 1848.

* Meaning *Lady*.

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DESCRIPTION OF THE FRONTISPIECE.

The illumination prefixed to the present volume is taken from a very fine and interesting Manuscript in the British Museum, entitled "Roman du Quête du Saint Graal," which has been obligingly pointed out to the Publisher by Sir Frederick Madden.

The centre figure represents King Arthur; on his right is Queen Ginevra, and on his left the enchanter Merlin. The Grand Carver, Cupbearer, and Minstrel, in the foreground, are distinguished by their several insignia. On the left of the Queen is a Lady-in-Waiting, and on the right, between Merlin and the Grand Carver, is a lady, supposed to be bringing in a petition to present to the King.

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

View of the Changes which took place in the Romance or French Language, in consequence of the first Danish Invasions.—Its Preservation and Improvement by the same People after their Establishment in Normandy.—Their first Attempts at Composition.—Their Style improved by the Clergy.—Remarks on their Minstrels.

It is generally admitted that the word *Romance** was first employed to signify the Roman language as spoken in the European provinces of the empire; and that, in its most extensive sense, it comprised all the dialects of which the basis was the vulgar Latin, whatever might be the other materials which entered into their construction. The name was, therefore, equally applicable to the Italian, the Spanish, and French; and was sometimes, though incorrectly, applied to the vulgar languages of other countries;† but the earliest and most familiar use of the word in this island was to express that dialect of the French which had been introduced among us by the Norman conquest. It was afterwards, by an easy transition, employed to signify indiscriminately all such works as were composed in that dialect; and lastly, in consequence of the growing fondness of our Norman ancestors for tales of chivalry, became exclusively appropriated to this species of composition.

Such being the variations which have taken place in the meaning of the word, it seems necessary that we should

* In old French it is sometimes written *Roman*, and sometimes *Romans*, whence our English word.

† A remarkable instance of its application to the *English* is quoted by Ritson from Giraldus Cambrensis.

endeavour to ascertain, at least by approximation, of these changes; and it will probably appear that a tion to this preliminary has produced much of the of opinion which at present prevails respecting the Romantic fiction.

The best French historians inform us that the began to supersede the Latin as a colloquial languag about the beginning of the ninth century. The se ruptions introduced by a succession of barbarous na been blended into a common mass, and gradually language which, from its copiousness, from the sim its grammar, and from its close analogy to the dial neighbouring nations, was a more useful instrument intercourse than the Latin, though less suited to lite positions, to which, in the first instance, it cannot be to have been applied. Indeed the Latin could not diately and totally forgotten, even by the vulgar, be greater number of its words were retained in the ne and because it was still the vehicle of religious in and the medium of all written contracts between in as well as of all laws issued by the sovereign. Romance language in this early state very few wri cimens can have existed; yet, of these few, one has tunately preserved.

The kings of France of the second race adopted, example of Charlemagne, the injudicious practice of their dominions among their children; whose ambi excited, led to a long succession of civil discord. Th Louis le Debonnaire, even during his lifetime, were c in arms against each other, and often against their fa their dissensions after his death produced a dreadful blood during the war which was terminated by the de battle of Fontenay, in June 841. It was therefore necessary that their reconciliation should be marke greatest possible degree of solemnity; their respecti were called in as witnesses and parties to the oath they bound themselves to rest satisfied with the di territory finally adjudged to each; and, that the term oath might be perfectly intelligible, it was translated vulgar tongue of the several nations. Louis le Ge addressed the French army of his brother in *Romance*

le Chauve read his oath in the Tudesque, or Teutonic, to the soldiers of Louis; and both received the assent of the troops to the agreement in the same languages respectively. This curious monument of the Romance tongue, the most ancient specimen now existing, is to be found in Lacombe's Preface to the Supplement of his Dictionnaire du Vieux Langage, and in Mr. Ritson's Dissertation on Romance and Minstrelsy.

It appears from this specimen that the Romance of the year 842, which very nearly resembled the present Provençal, was the general language of France, and not a southern dialect; because the provinces of Aquitaine and Neustria were the original dominions of Charles: they had been confirmed to him in the present treaty, and their inhabitants formed a great part of his army. At the same time, the Frankish, or Teutonic, is said to have prevailed in some of the eastern provinces,* that is to say, in Franche Comté and the Lyonese, as well as in the countries bordering on the Rhine, the Meuse, and the Scheldt.

But the uniformity of the Romance language was not of long duration. In 845, a formidable army of Danes or Normans entering the Seine, carried their depredations to the very gates of Paris; and the booty thus obtained encouraging them to fresh enterprises, they renewed them almost without intermission, and formed a permanent establishment in the western provinces, which they gradually extended till the year 912, when their usurpations were confirmed to them by a treaty with Charles the Simple. Rollo received in marriage the king's daughter Giselle, and for her dower the sovereignty of Neustria, since called Normandy, together with extensive rights in Britany, on the sole conditions of embracing Christianity, and of putting a stop to the devastations which had been continued during half a century.

From these invasions ultimately resulted the division of the Romance language into an almost infinite number of dialects, which subsisted during the greater part of the tenth century. It is not meant that the Normans materially contributed to this change, by importing into the conquered

* At the council held at Tours in 813, it was directed that the Homilies shall be translated "in rusticam linguam Romanam, aut Theotiscam;" and the same was ordered at the council of Arles in 851.

from an easy and constant intercourse be
and the interruption of this intercourse
diversity of dialects. The prevalence of
from the extent and stability of the Ro
purity of the Romance could only have l
permanence of that of Charlemagne.
extensive territory, and the disputes an
successors, enervated the strength of th
and laid open the country to the ravages
ders; whose triumphs were less pernici
they immediately produced, than from
cessful usurpation which they held out
France was parcelled out amongst a num
always in arms against each other, or aga
and the vulgar tongue, not yet subjected
mar, or fixed by any just models of com
doned to all the innovations which might
ignorance or from the mixed races of th
several independent districts into whic
divided.

Nor was this all. During the strang
tenth century the whole scheme of soc
altered; so that it became necessary to i
a great variety of new relations, and arbi
barbarous words into the Latin, from wh
transferred into all the vulgar language
arose a new Latinity, which has given no
modern etymologists.

It is not necessary that we should

have divided the property of the conquered into *Salic* lands and military *benefices*.* The former were the portions of land allotted, in the first instance, to the conquerors in absolute property. The latter were left to the original proprietors, with a reserve of a considerable part of their revenues, to defray the expenses of government; they answered the purposes of our civil list; and a certain allotment of territory formed the salaries of all the civil and military officers, who were nominated by the prince, and held their offices for life. Such *benefices* therefore were strictly *livings*, and gave their name to the benefices of the church, which they exactly resembled; and every inhabitant of the country, whether of Frankish or Gallic origin, being equally eligible to every office at the sole discretion of the sovereign, there was no permanent distinction of rank in the state, except that of prince and subject. But during the impotence of the crown under the kings of the second race, the Dukes, or governors of provinces, the Earls, or governors of towns, and some other officers of state, extorted the hereditary establishment of their respective dignities in their own families; and, uniting the property of the land with the right of administering justice, became the real sovereigns of the districts over which they had before presided as temporary magistrates.† The ambition of the delegates who extorted, and the weakness of the princes who made these concessions, may be easily accounted for; but we can only explain the acquiescence of the nation in an exchange of freedom for the most complicated slavery, by the intolerable misery to which they had been reduced by the Norman invasions. Indeed, the Norman writers tell us that Rollo was compelled to stipulate for the grant of certain rents in Britany, because it was impossible, in consequence of the ravages committed by his own orders, or those of his predecessors, to find subsistence for his army in the fertile province of Normandy.

But these ferocious men had no sooner settled themselves in their conquests, than they eagerly adopted, and cultivated with the greatest care, the language of the vanquished. Wil-

* See Hénault's Remarques particulières sur la seconde Racc. Ab. Chron. de l'Hist. de France.

† The establishment of this monstrous system is usually placed under the reign of Raoul, who was raised to the throne of France A.D. 923.

liam I., the immediate successor of Rollo, being desirous that his son Richard should acquire some knowledge of the Danish, found it necessary to have him educated at Baieux, rather than at Rouen, where the Romance had already obtained a decided preference;* and it was to the capital of Normandy that the French were indebted for the preservation of their vulgar tongue, which there found an asylum under an active and vigorous government; while France itself, till near the end of the tenth century, was torn to pieces by contending factions. It continued indeed to be spoken at Paris; but its general diffusion over Europe was the work of the Normans. By them it was first employed in composition; and it may perhaps be fairly assumed, that the people of Picardy, and of the other provinces to the north of the Loire, whose dialects had already a mixture of the Teutonic, would readily assimilate them to the speech of a neighbouring province, whose inhabitants had astonished the world by the unexampled splendour of their conquests.

The earliest specimen of northern French literature is a metrical life of Wandril and of some other saints, translated from the Latin by Thibaut de Vernon, Canon of Rouen, about the middle, perhaps, of the eleventh century;† but no copy of this work has yet been discovered. The next in point of antiquity, according to the French historians, was the poem on the first crusade, compiled from the Latin chronicles of the the time by the Chevalier Bechada of Limoges. This, however, has been also lost; but the dialect in which it was written may be inferred from his having undertaken it by the advice of Gaubert, a Norman. It is supposed to have been begun about the year 1112, and finished about 1125; and admitting this date, it is less antient than the first work of Philippe de Thaun, called the *Livre des Créatures*, a French metrical treatise on chronology, written soon after the year 1106, and described by the Abbé de la Rue.‡ Another work

* See Dudon of St. Quentin, p. 83, ed. Duchesne.

† M. de la Rue says, "*a long time before the conquest:*" M. de la Ravaillère, on the contrary, seems to place Thibaut's work about 1108. Yet they both cite the same authority, viz. vol. iii. p. 379, of the Benedictine historians.

‡ Printed by Mr. Wright, 8vo. 1841. For more correct information on the author and chronology, see Wright's Biog. Brit. Literaria, Anglo-Norman Period, pp. 86-7.

by the same, is a poem on natural history, translated from the *Bestiarius*, and finished after 1121: after which we have the Proverbs of Solomon in verse, by Samson de Nanteuil; a British and Anglo-Saxon history, by Geoffroi Gaimar; and a history of Henry I., alluded to in that poem as the composition of one David; all written, as the Abbé de la Rue very reasonably supposes, during the reign of Stephen.

This series of facts and dates seems to lead to the following conclusions: First, that the northern Romance, or Norman French, was not employed as a written language till very near the time of the conquest; and secondly, that, during about an hundred years which elapsed between the middle of the eleventh century and the accession of Henry II. in 1154, all the principal compositions in that language were either devotional and moral tracts, lives of saints, scientific treatises, or chronicles. All of these were metrical; and generally, perhaps universally, translations. The minor compositions were, probably, much more numerous; and seem to have consisted of war songs, satirical songs, encomiastic songs, and of something like historical ballads. Of the first class, the most celebrated instance is the *chanson de Rolland*,* which was sung by the minstrel Taillefer at the battle of Hastings: the *serventois* or satirical songs seem to have formed a principal amusement of the armies during the first crusade;† and they may be presumed to have abounded so as to have given great offence in England, since Henry I., surnamed *le Beau-clerc*, either on account of his literary attainments or in honour of his liberal patronage, thought fit to punish a satirist, the Chevalier Luc de la Barre, by putting out his eyes.‡ The number of encomiastic songs may be inferred from the extensive largesses to minstrels which are recorded during this period; and con-

* The late Mr. Ritson, in his Dissertation on Romance and Minstrelsy, p. xxxvi, has said, "The real chanson de Rolland was, *unquestionably*, a metrical romance, of great length, upon the fatal battle of Roncevaux, of which Taillefer only chanted a part." He probably meant no more than that he did not wish the assertion to be questioned. William of Malmesbury, whom he quotes, says, "CANTILENA *Rollandi inchoatâ*, &c." which seems to mean a *song*, and not a *metrical romance of great length*.

† La Ravaillère, vol. i. p. 260, who transcribes a passage in the Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 180, in proof of that fact.

‡ Abbé de la Rue. Archæol., vol. xii. p. 301.

temporary writers not unfrequently cite the historical* ballads of the time as authorities for occasional anecdotes. But it may be safely affirmed that no trace of a professed work of fiction; no semblance of an epic fable; in short, no specimen of what we should now call a romance, is to be found before the middle of the twelfth century; indeed this period might, perhaps, be still further limited.

The preceding list, it is true, can only be admitted as negative evidence; and it may be objected, that many writers are likely to have existed besides those whose works have been preserved, or whose names have been accidentally recorded by their surviving contemporaries: it may also be contended, that the minstrels of those times, who, like their predecessors the Bards and Scalds, were accustomed to preserve in their traditional rhymes various anecdotes of religious as well as military history, may be supposed to have formed a certain stock of fabulous narratives, which they recited for the amusement of a less devout or more indolent class of hearers.

To the first of these objections it would be easy to find an answer, if it were necessary to inquire into the subject of compositions whose existence, though certainly possible, is not very probable: but the second objection may deserve to be examined at large, although we are unable after all to offer anything more than a conjectural history of what may be called the traditional literature of this period.

That a class of men who cultivated the arts of amusement as a profession, were known and esteemed by the Normans at the time of the conquest, is undeniably proved by the evidence of Domesday-book; in which we find a certain BERDIC pos-

* Ordericus Vitalis, speaking of St. William, says, "Vulgo *canitur a joculatoribus de illo* CANTILENA: sed jure præferenda est relatio authentica quæ a religiosis doctoribus solerter est edita, et a studiosis lectoribus reverenter lecta est, in communi fratrum audientiâ." Scriptores Norman. ap. Duchesne, p. 598. This *relatio authentica*, of which Ordericus gives an abridgement, seems to have formed the devotional romance of Guillaume au Court-nez, a French commander employed by Charlemagne against the Saracens in Spain, and rewarded for his services by a present of the duchy of Aquitaine. St. William ended his days in a cloister. His romance, according to Le Grand, was written in Provençal by a Troubadour, as was also Philumena, which contains some military anecdotes of Charlemagne. See Preface aux Fabliaux, &c.

sessed of a large tract of land in Gloucestershire, under the title of *joculator regis*. The register, of course, does not explain the talents of this joculator, or jougleur; but it may be fairly assumed that they were similar to those of the minstrel Taillefer, who, as Wace informs us, "moult bien chantout," and who preceded the Duke of Normandy at the battle of Hastings, "singing about Charlemagne, and Rolland, and Olivier, and the vassals who died at Roncesvalles." We are further informed by Gaimar, that he performed many marvellous feats of dexterity: throwing his lance into the air as if it were a small stick; catching it by the point before he cast it against the enemy; and repeating the same operation with his sword, so that they who beheld him considered him as a conjuror—

I.'un dit à l'altre ki co veit,
Ke co esteit enchantement,
Ke cil fesait devant la gent,
Quant, &c.

Now, unless it could be proved that the Normans adopted the profession of minstrelsy from the French, of which there is no evidence, it must follow that they carried it with them from Denmark; and as Bishop Percy has shown that a character nearly analogous existed amongst the Danes as well as the Anglo-Saxons, the derivation of the minstrels from the *Scalds* and *Glee-men* of the North, as established in the Essay prefixed to the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," seems to rest upon as fair historical testimony as can be required in confirmation of such an opinion.

It may, therefore, be reasonably admitted that Rollo carried with him his domestic bards, who, when their native idiom began to fall into disuse, would have been compelled to exercise their talents in the newly-adopted language; but still the success of their poetical efforts must have depended on the state in which they found this language, to the perfection of which they could not, from their want of learning, materially contribute.

It is true that the first progress of mankind, from a rude and uncouth jargon to settled forms of speech, has been, in almost every country, attributed to poetry. Hence the deification of the Muses, the fable of Orpheus, and various allego-

ries all over the world. In fact, however savage a society may be, it certainly must be composed of the two sexes; and it is at least probable that the males will sometimes amuse themselves by courting the females, and sometimes by fighting with each other, either from rivalry, or from ambition, or from the mere honour and glory of producing destruction. Love and war, therefore, to which perhaps we may add the hopes and fears suggested by superstition, will afford the first themes for the efforts of infant language; and as every language must be composed of sounds varying in quantity, or in accent, or susceptible of alliteration, or distinguishable into pauses by the recurrence of rhyme, all of which expedients afford the means of fixing a series of short sentences in the memory, it is not easy to conceive a nation which does not possess some rudiments of poetry. Verse, therefore, is anterior to prose, because our passions are anterior to reason and judgment; because vocal sounds are the natural expressions of emotion, not of reflection; and because the analysis of thought is the result of long abstraction. It is true that the poet, during the progress of civilization, may assist in promoting not only the beauty but the accuracy of language, by the vivid illustration of metaphor, and by nice distinctions in the shades of expression: but admitting that such a poetical spirit is to be found in the Danish Scalds, it does not follow that it was or could be transmitted to the Norman minstrels.

It must be remembered that the Romance tongue was, in its origin, a corruption of the Latin, and required nothing more for the purpose of adapting it to every species of composition than a nearer assimilation to its parent language, which, from frequent use in the most familiar intercourse of letters, as well as in all legal contracts, had gradually adopted a grammar perfectly analogous to that of the colloquial dialects of Europe. We should therefore expect to see this improvement, so soon as the learned, that is to say, the clergy, should find themselves interested in opening to the illiterate, through the medium of the vulgar tongue, those stores of literature to which they alone had access. Now it is difficult to imagine a concurrence of circumstances more likely to excite this interest, than that which took place towards the close of the eleventh and the commencement of the twelfth century. It was then that the madness of pilgrimage, which had long pre-

vailed among the Normans, and had carried, in 1064, a body of seventy thousand fanatics into the Holy Land, became epidemical throughout Europe, and produced the first crusade (in 1096), which, by placing a Christian prince on the throne of Jerusalem, led the way to a long succession of these holy expeditions.

Whatever may have been the means employed by Peter the Hermit, and afterwards by St. Bernard, to excite a spirit of enthusiasm, which was, in various ways, so beneficial to the church, it was evidently important that the clergy in general should be furnished with the means of enforcing, as widely as possible, the most persuasive arguments in its favour; and consequently that the vulgar tongue should become a principal object of clerical attention. Since, therefore, the earliest French compositions which we possess are generally, if not universally, translations; and since their authors, when not distinguished by any ecclesiastical titles, usually qualify themselves by the appellation of *clercs*, a name expressive of their pretensions to some erudition; it seems unreasonable to assign, without any authority, to an unlearned class of men, the anterior invention of works of fiction; a species of composition which may be termed the luxury of literature, usually growing out of and indicating a large previous stock of necessary and useful learning.

The following may perhaps be accepted as a tolerable summary of the history of the minstrels. It appears likely that they were carried by Rollo into France, where they probably introduced a certain number of their native traditions; those, for instance, relating to Ogier le Danois, and other northern heroes, who were afterwards enlisted into the tales of chivalry; but that, being deprived of the mythology of their original religion, and cramped perhaps, as well by the sober spirit of Christianity, as by the imperfection of a language whose tameness was utterly inapplicable to the sublime obscurity of their native poetry, they were obliged to adopt various modes of amusing, and to unite the talents of the mimic and the juggler, as a compensation for the defects of the musician and poet. Their musical skill, however, if we may judge from the number of their instruments, of which very formidable catalogues are to be found in every description of a royal festival, may not have been contemptible; and their poetry, even

though confined to short compositions, was not likely to be void of interest to their hearers, while employed on the topics of flattery or satire. Their rewards were certainly, in some cases, enormous, and prove the esteem in which they were held; though this may be partly ascribed to the general thirst after amusement, and the difficulty experienced by the great in dissipating the tediousness of life; so that the gift of three parishes in Gloucestershire, assigned by William the Conqueror for the support of his *joculator*, may perhaps be a less accurate measure of the minstrel's accomplishments than of the monarch's power and of the insipidity of his court.

To the talents already enumerated the minstrels added, soon after the birth of French literature, the important occupation of the *diseur* or *declaimer*. Perhaps the declamation of metrical compositions might have required, during their first state of imperfection, some kind of chant, and even the assistance of some musical instruments, to supply the deficiencies of the measure; perhaps the aids of gesture and pantomime* may have been necessary to relieve the monotony of a long recitation: but at all events it is evident, that an author who wrote for the public at large, during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, was not less dependent for his success on the minstrels, than a modern writer of tragedy or comedy on the players of the present day. A copyist might multiply manuscripts for the supply of convent-libraries; but while ecclesiastics alone were able to read, there was no access to the ears of a military nobility, without the intervention of a body of men who travelled in every direction, and who were everywhere welcomed as the promoters of mirth and conviviality.

The next step was easy. Being compelled to a frequent exercise of their talent in extemporaneous compositions, the minstrels were probably, like the *improvisatori* of Italy, at least equal, if not superior, to more learned writers, in the merely mechanical parts of poetry; they were also better judges of the public taste. By the progress of translation they became the depositaries of nearly all the knowledge of the age,

* The minstrels are not unfrequently called *mimi*. Ordericus Vitalis, describing a contemporary character, says, "Erat enim in militia promptus, in dando nimis prodigus, gaudens ludis et luxibus, *mimis, equis, et canibus, aliisque hujusmodi vanitatibus.*" p. 598.

was committed to their memory: it was natural, therehat they should form a variety of new combinations he numerous materials in their possession; and it will wn hereafter, that many of our most popular romances nost probably brought by their efforts to the state in we now see them. This was the most splendid æra of istory, and seems to have comprehended the latter part twelfth and perhaps the whole of the thirteenth century. that time, from the general progress of instruction, the r of readers began to increase; and the metrical ces were insensibly supplanted by romances in prose, monotony neither required nor could derive much assisfrom the art of declamation. The visits of the minstrels en only periodical, and generally confined to the great ls of the year; but the resources, such as they were, of nderous prose-legend were always accessible. Thus the decline of a body of men, whose complete degradaeems to have been the subsequent result of their own

During the period of their success, they had most ently abused the credulity of the public; but it is a ical fact, that the same fables which were discredited in verse, were again, on their transfusion into prose, ed without suspicion. It should seem that falsehood is lly safe from detection, when concealed under a suffiloak of dulness.

SECTION II.

First Romances merely Metrical Histories.—Origin of Romantic Fiction ascribed by Bishop Percy to the Northern Nations—by Mr. Warton to the Arabians—by others attributed to the Celtic Tribes of Armorica, Wales, &c.—Attempt to reconcile these Opinions.—Probability that the first French Romances were written in England.—Authorities in support of this Supposition.

THE opinions delivered in the preceding section would perhaps require for their confirmation a regular analysis of the state of French literature during the latter half of the twelfth century; but as this has been accurately made by La Ravaillère* and the Abbé de la Rue,† it will be sufficient in this place to state, that nearly all the romances of that period which still exist, comprehending the various works of Wace, Benoit de St. More, Alexandre de Paris, and others cited by Fauchet, profess to be chronicles or true histories, and are known to have been translated or imitated from the Latin. Thus, for instance, Wace's Brut was a version of Geoffrey of Monmouth; le Roman d'Alexandre, of the Vita Alexandri by Gautier de l'Isle; Benoit's Trojan War was imitated from Dictys Cretensis and others; and the romances respecting Charlemagne are perhaps copied, in part, from the Latin Chronicle of the imaginary Turpin.

The mode of translation adopted by these early romancers was indeed rather licentious, as they were satisfied with giving the substance of the story as intelligibly as they could, reserving to themselves the liberty of contracting what they thought too diffuse, of omitting what they considered as unnecessary, and of enlarging such passages as appeared most important. But they were generally attentive to the style of their original, and seldom lost an opportunity of enriching

* Revol. de la Langue Françoise, &c. prefixed to an edition of the Chansons du Roi de Navarre.

† See Archæologia, vol. xii. pp. 50 and 297.

r work by an exact imitation of the most gaudy and ıdid descriptions which they found in their way; so that ɔuld often be easy to trace them, even in their compila-ı, by a comparison of the style of the Latin authors whom consulted. For instance, M. de la Rue, speaking of ɔit, says, "The author often presents us with certain turns images which are truly poetical. Of this an idea may be ed by his description of spring, at the beginning of which o quitted England for Neustria·

Quant li ivers fu trepassez,
Vint li duls tens, e li estez;
Venta l'aure sueve et quoie,
Chanta li merles et la treie;
Bois reverdirent e preal,
E gent florirent li ramel;
Parut la rose buen olanz,
E altre flors de maint semblanz."*

ow Dudo of St. Quentin, in relating the same event, aces his account by a description very nearly similar. words are: "Cum autem primæ æstatis tempore, rutilan-ı molliter florum arrideret copia, purpureisque blattis ɔa et odorifera alberent lilia, memor semper visionis ɛntis ad Franciam proficisci, [Rollo] classibus velis datis, ɛm conscendit."†

; may perhaps be proper to observe in this place, that ng the poems attributed to Wace by the Abbé de la Rue ıe (le Chevalier au Lion) which Mr. Ritson pronounces to he original of Yvain and Gawain. If this be true,‡ as it nds with an unusual number of marvellous adventures, ıgh its actors be personages who were formerly supposed ɔelong to real history, it may perhaps be considered as nging to an intermediate class between the earliest, which be called the historical romances, and the purely fabu-

Archæol., vol. xii. p. 315.
Script. Norm. ap. Duchesne, p. 73.
This romance is correctly supposed by Fauchet to have been written hrestien de Troyes. The same poet is said to have composed the réal, the Chevalier à l'Epée (though this is probably a mistake), La ette, &c. He flourished about 1190.

lous romances composed by the minstrels in the thirteenth century.

Having thus far attempted to trace the progress of romance-literature in general, we may now proceed to inquire more particularly into that class of compositions which has furnished to the Italians a new and splendid species of epic poetry, and which afforded, even in the ruder hands of our Norman ancestors, many ingenious attempts at something like an epic fable.

Various theories have been proposed for the purpose of explaining the origin of romantic fiction, which has been successively ascribed to the Scandinavians, to the Arabians, and to the Armoricans, while some authors have supposed it to be of Provençal, and others of Norman invention. Bishop Percy, to whose elegant taste we are indebted for the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," the most agreeable selection, perhaps, which exists in any language, has prefixed to his third volume a short but masterly dissertation, in which he assigns to the Scalds the honour of having produced the earliest specimens in this mode of composition. He observes that these poets, the historians of the north, as the Bards were of Gaul and Britain, continued for a time the faithful depositaries of their domestic annals; but that at a subsequent period, when history was consigned to plain prose, they gradually attempted to "set off their recitals by such marvellous fictions as were calculated to captivate gross and ignorant minds. Thus began stories of adventures with giants, and dragons, and witches, and enchanters, and all the monstrous extravagances of wild imagination, unguided by judgment and uncorrected by art." He contends that the vital spirit of chivalry, its enthusiastic valour, its love of adventure, and its extravagant courtesy, are to be found in the Scaldic songs; that these characteristic qualities existed in the manners of the northern nations long before the establishment of knighthood as a regular order; that the superstitions opinions of these people, respecting fairies and other preternatural beings, were extremely analogous to the later fictions of romance; that the migration of a certain number of Scalds into France, as attendants on Rollo's army, is at least extremely probable; and that, since the first mention of the stories of chivalry occurs in the song of a Norman minstrel at the battle of Hastings,

this filiation of romance is equally consonant to history and to probability.

The only rational objection, perhaps, which can be adduced against this system is, that it is too exclusive. The History of Charlemagne, it is true, appears to have been very early in favour with the Normans, because the song of Rollo certainly, and that of St. William very possibly, were anterior to the conquest; and it is also likely that these and other fragments of traditional poetry may have contributed the principal materials of those longer works which, at a much later period, formed the regular romances of Renaud de Montauban, Fierabras, Otuel, Ferragus, and the other heroes of Charlemagne. But this does not account for the much more numerous and popular fictions concerning Arthur and his knights, which occupy not only so many of the romances, but also of the lays and fabliaux, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and are evidently derived, as the learned editor very candidly acknowledges, from a different source. Besides, though the manners of chivalry, as exhibited in the Rolands and Olivers, are common to the Launcelots and Tristrams, nothing can be more opposite than the morals of the heroines; and the frailties of an Yseult or a Guenever afford a lamentable contrast to the severe chastity of a northern beauty. But surely, in surveying a system of fictions in which love and war are the chief agents, it is impossible to abstract our attention altogether from the delineations of female character.

We must confess, however, that Bishop Percy has fairly traced one class of romantic fictions to the traditional songs of the Norman minstrels. These songs, as it is supposed, are now lost; but it is not impossible that some of them may yet be detected among the very miscellaneous contents of our early manuscripts. Le Grand has prefixed to the fabliau of "Les trois Chevaliers et la Chemise," a fragment which breathes the genuine spirit of the Gothic odes; and which, whether it be an original or translated from some northern saga, evinces that the Normans continued to preserve, during at least two centuries, a fondness for the peculiar poetry of their ancestors. The fragment here alluded to has been translated by Way under the title of "The Gentle Bachelor."

The second hypothesis has been adopted by Warton, who, not contented with referring to the Arabians the many

[illegible] in the eighth century. He supposes
ons found an entry into France through the
d Marseilles, whence they travelled (probabl
aly. In the same manner they might get to I
ter a long journey, and being received with
es in that province, would find an easy passa
It is unnecessary to examine at any length
theory, of which the substance has been al
shop Percy in the later editions of his essay.
arton has carried to an extravagant length
fluence of Arabian invention, and though he i
fanciful analogies, we must not infer, wi
itic,* that his opinions are totally unfounded
fterwards Pope Sylvester II.) introduced the
ls into France, at least a century before the c
ving by his wonderful skill in mechanics, acqui
mposed a clock, was therefore considered as a
licial astrology, a science of Arabian inventic
same time generally disseminated through E
ctice of medicine, to which we have so many
early romances, was exclusively taught in
ools,—it cannot be absurd to suppose that the
judices of mankind were considerably modi
nces; that they may have had some influence
ell as on manners; and that the innovations
rior to the crusades. The first of these fa
ns was undertaken, not against the Arabia
nst the Turcoman usurpers of their authority;
e descendants of Mahomet retained their po

severer study in acquiring, and might occasionally soothe the distress of their patients by reciting, Arabian tales of amusement. A collection of such tales, we know, compiled by Petrus Alfonsus, a converted Jew,* was published in Latin under the title of "Clericalis Disciplina," early in the twelfth century, and translated, perhaps about the close of the same century, under the title of "Le Castoiement d'un Père à son Fils;" and it is by no means improbable that many more fabliaux† may have been borrowed from the same nation.

The third hypothesis, which supposes Britany to be the native country of romantic fiction, has been, with some modifications, adopted by Leyden in his very able Introduction to the "Complaynt of Scotland;" and has the advantage of being free from the objections which have been made to the preceding theories. Similarity of language proves the similar origin of the Armoricans, and of the natives of this island; and the British historians, such as they are, affirm that a large colony of fugitives from Saxon tyranny took refuge in Britany, and carried with them such of their archives as had escaped the fury of their conquerors. The Norman poets themselves frequently profess to have derived their stories from a Breton original; and their positive testimony seems sufficient to prove that the memory of Arthur and his knights was preserved in Armorica no less than in Wales and Cornwall. With respect to the tales of Charlemagne and his imaginary peers, unless we suppose them to have been imported by the Normans from

* See Appendix, No. I.

† The words *roman*, *fablian*, and *lai*, are so often used indifferently by the old French writers, that it is difficult to lay down any positive rule for discriminating between them. But I believe that the word *roman* particularly applies to such works as were supposed to be strictly historical. Such are the romances of Arthur, Charlemagne, Alexander, The Trojan War, &c. The *fabliaux* were generally stories supposed to have been invented for the purpose of illustrating some moral; or real anecdotes capable of being so applied. The *lai*, according to Le Grand, chiefly differed from the fabliaux, in being interspersed with musical interludes; but I suspect that they were generally translations from the British. The word is said to be derived from *leudus;* but *laoi* seems to be the general name of a class of Irish metrical compositions, as "Laoi na Seilge" and others, quoted by Walker (Hist. Mem. of Irish Bards), and it may be doubted whether the word was not formerly common to the Welsh and Armorican dialects.

already mentioned, that a mutual exchange of
have introduced Ogier and other Danish hero
of Charlemagne; and perhaps a similar comm
he bards of Wales and Britany may have give
Sir Launcelot and other French worthies. T
hat some traditional anecdotes concerning the
of romance were already current among the N
explain the facility with which the very suspic
of Geoffrey and Turpin were received, and
mplifications by which they were, after their t
French, almost immediately embellished.

The reader will perceive that the preceding s
no means incompatible, and that there is no abs
posing that the scenes and characters of our rom
were very generally, though not exclusively, der
Bretons, or from the Welsh of this island; that
olouring, and perhaps some particular adventur
candinavian origin; and that occasional episo
ith part of the machinery, may have been borro
rabians. In fact, there is reason to believe th
eir survey of Gothic literature, as well as of
cture, have too hastily had recourse to a singl
r the purpose of explaining the probable ori
d proportions which appeared unusual, and
nich were thought to arise from a wild and cap
d in both cases it will perhaps be found tha
en nothing more than accidental association, a
s been attributed to originality of design, v
ult of an awkward attempt to combine incom

tion to which the writers of the twelfth century can be supposed to have had access, has, so far, the greatest appearance of probability.

But before we adopt this or any other hypothesis, it will be proper to satisfy ourselves respecting the country which produced the first romances; because the materials employed in their construction are likely to have depended very much on the feelings and prejudices of the persons who used them.

It is certainly natural to assume, in the first instance, that whatever is French must have been written in France; but such an assumption with respect to the period which has hitherto engaged our attention, when the same language was spoken at the courts of Paris and London, would be very problematical without the support of some direct evidence. We know that Alexandre de Bernay, a Norman, wrote at Paris; but that Benoit, who prides himself on being a Frenchman, wrote in England: we know also, from the confession of the poets themselves, that profit was, at least as much as fame, the object of their pursuit; and it is reasonable to conclude that writers flocked in greatest number to the court where they were most in request, and were likely to be most liberally rewarded. Now it is evident that the Dukes of Normandy, when possessed of the crown of England, were incomparably more wealthy, though not in the same proportion more powerful, than the contemporary Kings of France; and it may be presumed that the crowd of candidates for their patronage was, consequently, much more numerous. Our Henry the Second possessed, in right of his father, Maine, Anjou, and Touraine; in right of his wife Eleanor, divorced by Louis le Jeune, the countries of Poitou and Guienne; in right of his mother Matilda, Normandy and England; and his power in the latter, the most valuable part of his dominions, was paramount and uncontrolled, while Louis was surrounded by powerful and rival vassals. We are therefore justified in suspecting that the courts of our Norman sovereigns, rather than those of the kings of France, produced the birth of romance literature; and this suspicion is confirmed by the testimony of three French writers, whose authority is the more conclusive, because they have formed their opinion from separate and independent premises.

The first of these is M. de la Ravaillère. In his Essay on

the Revolutions of the French Language, a work of considerable learning, supported by original authorities, whose words he almost constantly quotes, he distinctly asserts that the pretended patronage of the French princes anterior to Philippe Auguste had no visible effect on their domestic literature; that while so many poets were entertained at the courts of the Anglo-Norman princes, no one can be traced to that of Louis le Jeune; that the chronicles of Britain and Normandy, the subjects chosen by Wace and his contemporaries, were not likely to *interest* the French; but that "the esteem in which the kings of England held the French language was likely to be soon communicated to the Court of France."*

The second authority is M. le Comte de Tressan, a writer perhaps of no deep research, but whose good taste is conclusive on points of internal evidence. In his preface to the prose romance of "La Fleur des Batailles" (one of those relating to Charlemagne) he says, "The style and character of these romances lead us to think that they were composed at the court of the English kings descended from William the Conqueror. We find, in those of the round table, a marked affectation of dwelling on every thing which can contribute to the glory of the throne and court of England, whose princes and knights always play the chief and most brilliant part in the piece. Indeed, we cannot behold without some sentiments of indignation, the greatest of mankind degraded far below the rank which he occupies in real history. Charlemagne's character in romance is often unworthy of the hero. We see him almost without authority in his court, and unable to take a single step without the consent of his twelve peers. Yet we learn from history that never was prince more absolute than Charlemagne. We must therefore distinguish, in these romances, two different eras as well as characters: the *first* is that of *their composition in verse*, during the reigns of William's successors, princes always interested in casting a shade over the splendour of the French court and monarchy: the *second* is that when these romances, reduced to prose, were accommodated to the opinions subsisting at the time of

* Mais l'estime que les Rois d'Angleterre, maîtres de la Normandie, firent de notre langue, dut bientôt passer à la Cour de France. Vol. i. p. 157.

their *refabrication*."—Thirdly, the Abbé de la Rue may be considered as having proved the fact, by pointing out, in English history, the persons to whom the original poems were addressed. His three dissertations on the Anglo-Norman poets, in the twelfth and thirteenth volumes of the Archæologia, will convince the reader that no man has studied with more attention the early history and poetry of France; and he has given it as his decided opinion, that "*it was from England and Normandy that the French received the first works, which deserve to be cited, in their language.*"

Having thus narrowed the question, by removing many of the collateral difficulties, we may now proceed in our investigation, the minuteness and prolixity of which it is hoped the reader will pardon, because the change which we are endeavouring to trace was insensible at the time of its taking place, and, being therefore incapable of receiving direct historical evidence, can only be ascertained by circuitous reasoning.*

* Two sections of Ellis's Introduction are here omitted, because they merely furnish abstracts of Gildas, Nennius, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, translations of which are included in Bohn's Antiquarian Library. On the subject of Geoffrey of Monmouth, the reader may also refer to a paper by Mr. Wright in the *Archæologia* for 1848.

SECTION III.

Inquiry into the State of Wales during the eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth Centuries.—Intimate Connection between the Welsh and Normans.—Influence of this on Romance.—State of the Welsh Tribes within the Scottish Border.—Probability that some original, and many translated Romances, were the work of Scottish Poets.—Conclusion.

ALTHOUGH Geoffrey's British Chronicle is justly regarded as one of the corner-stones of romantic fiction, yet its principal, if not sole effect, was to stamp the names of Arthur, Merlin, Kay, and Gawain with the character of historical veracity; and thus to authorize a collection of all the fables already current respecting these fanciful heroes and their companions. For not one word is to be found in that compilation, concerning Sir Launcelot and his brothers; Sir Tristram; Sir Ywain; Joseph of Arimathea and the Sangreal; the round table, with its perilous seat; and the various quests and adventures which fill so many folio volumes. These were subsequent additions, but additions apparently derived from the same source. The names, the manners of the heroes, and the scenes of their adventures, were still British; and, the taste for these strange traditions continuing to gain ground during at least two centuries, the whole literature of Europe was ultimately inundated by the nursery-tales of Wales and Armorica, as it had formerly been by the mythology of Greece and Egypt.

As this apparent revolution in literary taste took place at a time when the Cymric language and people were driven, both in this island and in France, to the western extremities of the two countries, it must perhaps be principally attributed to a cause already mentioned; viz. the early connexion of the Normans with the people of Bretagne, among whom they first formed their language, and from whom they probably received, and brought over with them to England, the first traces of those traditions which they afterwards found in a more perfect

state among the Welsh of this island. But though this may be fairly received as a plausible and likely conjecture, it is worth while to examine whether the British nation was, during the twelfth century, so insulated and insignificant as it has been generally represented; or whether there were some circumstances in its political situation which gave to it, in the eyes of the Norman conquerors of England, a degree of importance very superior to that which could have resulted from the contracted state of its territory.

Unfortunately there is not one of our popular histories of England from which the reader could derive any satisfactory assistance in this inquiry. Indeed, it is chiefly to the researches of Whitaker, of Gibbon, and of Turner, that we are indebted for a rational account of the affairs of Britain during the Saxon era; after which we are again left in darkness, having no guides but the very laconic history of Caradoc, together with a few hints from the Anglo-Norman writers of the same period. It is to be hoped that the industrious editors of the Welsh Archæology will ultimately supply us with more abundant materials, and that some future historian may be enabled to form a more satisfactory narrative of events from the Norman conquest to the final subjugation of Wales by Edward I.; but in the mean time, the little that can be gleaned respecting a subject hitherto so much neglected, will perhaps be thought worth collecting. A few short remarks on the antecedent period may be convenient to some readers, by saving them the trouble of a reference to the authorities already mentioned.

It has been generally believed that the Britons became independent of Rome about the year 410, and that, when abandoned to their own efforts, they were perfectly equal to their own protection, so long as they continued in any degree united. But the thirty municipal governments, into which they seem to have been divided, were little calculated to promote unanimity of council or of action in a people always ready to split into factions: and it may be concluded that they soon relapsed into their ancient habits, and were separated into clans, headed by ambitious chieftains always struggling with each other for a precarious superiority. The successful inroads of the Scots and Picts seem to have forced on the Britons the creation of an elective dictator or Pendragon, an

officer apparently known to their earliest constitution; but when this dignity also was seized by usurpation, the whole country was plunged into irretrievable anarchy. Such was the state of things at the first arrival of the Saxons.

Hengist, whether brought to our shores by accident or by invitation, soon demanded and obtained, as the reward of his services, an independent establishment, which he afterwards continued to maintain and increase at the expense of the natives, whom his arrogance or their own fickleness provoked to hostilities. From this period, therefore, the isle of Thanet became Saxon-land, and the rest of the country Welsh-land; because, as Giraldus Cambrensis has justly observed, the Teutonic nations always gave to the Celtic the denomination of Welsh. Our island, therefore, was divided, about the middle of the fifth century, as it still is, into two parts, one of which has constantly continued to increase at the expense of the other, till their relative extent and population have been nearly reversed.

As the ultimate success of the Saxons is undeniable, the greater part of our historians have neglected to notice the slowness of their progress. Yet it appears that the west riding of Yorkshire was not completely subdued till 620, nor Lancashire till 670; more than two centuries of bloody warfare had therefore elapsed before the invaders were able to break the communication between the Britons of Wales and those of Cumberland and Strathcluyd. Cadwallon, who was killed in 631, and who is said to have fought against the Saxons no less than fourteen pitched battles, was apparently the last of the Welsh princes who attempted a regular contest for victory in the open field; but they still continued to harass their enemies by a long and vexatious opposition, adopting the same mode of resistance which was afterwards employed by the Scots against Edward I.; avoiding all pitched battles, but pouring down from their hills with sudden and unexpected violence, and wasting the Saxon provinces with frequent and desultory attacks. The extensive forests, which then covered nearly all the heights of the midland country, insured a retreat to the marauding natives, and afforded pasturage for the numerous flocks and herds which formed their principal subsistence, and for the small but active breed of horses which furnished a formidable cavalry. The Saxon writers, perhaps,

have related without much exaggeration several expeditions in which their armies penetrated into the very heart of Wales, wasting the country and destroying the cities; but though they conceal in studious silence their own losses, yet the famous rampart called Offa's dyke, erected as late as the middle of the eighth century, must be admitted as an undeniable testimony to the predatory activity of the Britons. The contest, however, became every day more unequal, because the law of gavel-kind, which prevailed in Wales, led to a constant subdivision of power and territory, whereas the numerous Saxon colonies were gradually consolidated into a monarchy. The Welsh, therefore, were ultimately reduced to a sullen acquiescence in the greatness of their rivals, and were even compelled to pay, as an acknowledgment of Saxon superiority, an annual tribute, the amount of which is fixed in the laws of Howel Dha.

Hume has represented the Saxons, during the progress of their conquests, as exterminating or driving away the whole British population, and has even contended that they were compelled to do so for the security of their own subsistence. It is singular that this acute and able writer should have convinced himself by so strange a reason. That a body of northern pirates should have been unable to subsist in a flourishing Roman colony without destroying the cultivators of the land; and that they should have found it expedient, while harassed by continual warfare, to lay by the sword and to take the plough into their own hands, would scarcely appear credible even if a similar conduct had been attributed, on the best historical evidence, to the Franks and other barbarous conquerors; because the necessity of obtaining recruits by sea was a peculiar obstacle to Saxon population. Indeed, a fact so glaringly absurd could never have obtained admittance into our history, had it not been assumed at the same time as a self-evident proposition, that our language and laws are purely northern, and exhibit no traces of any mixture between the Saxon conquerors and the native inhabitants. But this assumption has, on examination, been found to be false. There are good reasons for believing, that some portion of our language is of Welsh origin; and, with respect to our laws, Whitaker has shown that the Saxon system of policy was grafted upon that of the British, though considerably

innovation. Power and property, in
nsferred by that event into other hands; bu
nder which they were held, and the services ex
price, are either mentioned by name, or desc
ied in the various codes of laws enacted by
cestors. A nearly similar scheme is seen in th
ha, which is professedly a collection and renov
ages long before established in Wales; where
ccession, by requiring incessant subdivisions of
d multiplied the services of vassalage to as grea
could be demanded by the utmost refinements o
stem. Upon the whole, though it is certain that
nd princes of Britain defended their power v
our and obstinacy, it would be very rash to concl
whole body of their subjects preferred exile or ex
to a timid and disloyal acquiescence in the gov
a foreign invader; or that this invader disdaine
m the labours of his new subjects, either the ne
life, or those luxuries and useful arts which they
rom the Romans. In short, all analogy seems
ith the best evidence, in leading us to believe
s and Britons of the low lands were gradually in
ike the Franks and Gauls, though perhaps in
roportions, so as to form one people.
rman conquest was an event which was behel
with the greatest exultation, because it rever
eir enemies the Saxons, and on Harold, from w
uffered much; but they seem to have derived
ntage beyond the present gratification of their

place between the Norman and Cambrian lords, because we find the Normans called in as allies by Caradoc ap Griffith, and afterwards employed in some petty enterprises in Cardigan; while on the other hand a number of Welsh appear to have enlisted under the banners of the earl of Hereford. But what were exactly the relations between the Normans and their British neighbours; what was William's system of policy respecting them; or whether he had leisure to form any, amidst his various and important occupations, cannot be discovered from the imperfect notices of contemporary historians.

But the next reign furnishes us with some circumstances which, though generally passed over as unimportant, may perhaps throw some light on the obscure politics of this period. It seems that a petty baron of South Wales, named Einion ap Collwn, having by his military services ingratiated himself at the court of William Rufus, was dispatched to London by Jestyn ap Gwrgant, lord of Glamorgan, with orders to obtain, if possible, the succour of some Norman forces against Rhys ap Tewdwr, prince of South Wales; and was promised, if his embassy should be successful, the hand of Jestyn's daughter in marriage. Einion accomplished his purpose, and engaged the services of Robert Fitz-Hamon, and twelve other knights, by whose valour the victory was secured to Jestyn, and Rhys was slain in the engagement. But the hand of the lady was now contemptuously withheld; and the mortified ambassador had no means of obtaining redress but by requesting the assistance of his allies against his former employer. His negotiations were again successful; Jestyn was defeated in his turn, and his lands, comprehending the whole lordship of Glamorgan, were divided between Fitz-Hamon and his companions. Such a tempting example could not be resisted by Norman cupidity. William Rufus was assaulted by daily solicitors for the grant of such lands in Wales as the adventurers might be able to conquer; and many of our early nobility, the Cecils, the Lacies, the Montgomeries, the Mortimers, and others, owed a considerable part of their great demesnes to the success of similar expeditions. Yet when William himself, a prince of great military talents, at the head of a veteran and victorious army, attempted the invasion of Wales in 1097 it is agreed on all hands that he

was compelled to retreat most ingloriously, and after s considerable losses.

If we pursue our examination through the following we shall find a succession of similar contradictions was the increase of Norman influence in Wales, that l exercised there all the rights of a feudal sovereign; b on his favourites the territories of such Welsh lord thought it convenient to dispossess; and even confer Norman the vacant bishopric of St. David's. Yet h dition in 1113 against Griffith ap Conan,* prince c Wales, and Owen, prince of Powis, was by no mea table to the royal army; and the caresses which he b on these princes after their submission, and the sul progress of Griffith ap Rees, strongly confirm the ass the Welsh historians, that Henry's triumph, such as resulted much more from his policy than from his prowess.

During the troublesome reign of Stephen, the roya was completely crippled by internal dissensions; but of Henry II. we find four great expeditions into Wal William of Malmesbury seems to consider it as a gre of triumph, that the English monarch, by combin exertions of a powerful navy with those of a vast ar been enabled to extort the submission of the refractory men. If, therefore, we compare these mighty expedit imperfect successes with the very trifling effort b Edward I. precipitated Llewelyn from his throne, and his principality for ever to the English crown, we sh bably be convinced that the Welsh were indebted enjoyment of their independence, which lasted till t close of the thirteenth century, to other important c addition to the impracticable nature of their country the bravery and pertinacity with which it was defend

It will be remembered that, during this early per respective rights of kings, and of their barons or te capite, were very ill defined, and that this was the s frequent disputes in every part of Europe. During

* It may perhaps be worth while to remark, that this prince able to withstand the utmost efforts of a royal army, had been di his dominions by Hugh Lupus, earl of Chester.

the barons were dispersed, they could only escape the cious injustice of their sovereign by flight; unless they ssed such a degree of power as conferred a mischievous endence, and the means of resisting the just claims of rown. During war they formed a sort of volunteer ; had constant opportunities of consulting on the subject eir common interests; and often rendered abortive the concerted enterprises, in cases where those interests t have been compromised by success. Now the indepen- e of Wales, as affording a place of refuge to fugitives arbitrary power; as offering almost impregnable posi- for their fortified castles; as abounding with a tenantry d to predatory expeditions, and ready to take arms at rst summons,—was of the utmost importance to the whole of Norman barons, and particularly to those who had able to extort by force, or to obtain by matrimonial ices with the native princes, a permanent settlement in country. These last were among the most powerful of nobility; and the successes of the first adventurers in nd, under Strongbow, afford a curious example of the r which they were capable of deriving from their Welsh ds. It is therefore evident that every attempt at the gation of Wales on the part of the crown, was sure to be rted and opposed as much as possible by the officers of royal army, all of whom were personally interested in ering such expeditions abortive.

n the other hand, our monarchs were by no means inat- ve to their own interests, but employed all the engines of r and of flattery to procure and preserve a predominant est in the principality. When their arms were suc- ul, they never failed to exact from the Welsh a number ostages, usually chosen from the noblest youths of the try, on whom they revenged with remorseless severity y insurrection of their kindred; at the same time that encouraged and received at their court, with the most ring distinctions, all such Welsh lords as they were able ain to their interest. At other times they endeavoured, he allurements of a splendid alliance, to gain over the es themselves; and David ap Owen and Llewelyn ap erth had the honour of being married to Norman prin- s. All these efforts of policy were successful when

guided by able hands; but in an age when power was attached rather to the person than to the authority of the sovereign, it was impossible that either flattery or terror, when employed by such kings as John or Henry III., should control the insurbordination of the barons, or curb the restless activity of their Welsh allies. Accordingly the barons triumphed over the regal authority, and Llewelyn the Great appeared to have established, for a time, the ancient independence of his country. The real strength and importance of Wales, however, depended very much on the anarchy of the times; its weight appeared conspicuous only when it turned the scale between contending parties of its neighbours. It therefore vanished at the accession of Edward I., who succeeded to an undisputed throne with the reputation of eminent abilities. The Great Charter, now considered as law, must have fully satisfied the wishes of the wisest barons; the most turbulent were tired by the long duration of civil dissensions; all were dispos d to obey a sovereign who knew how to exact obedience; Edward had also a party in Wales nearly equal to that of the reigning prince; so that in removing that prince from the throne, and annexing the principality to his own dominions, he had simply the air of revoking the grant of a royal fief, in consequence of the contumacy of a rebellious vassal.

During the long course of political intrigue which was ultimately terminated by this conquest, it is certainly reasonable to suppose that a degree of intercourse, fully sufficient to account for any exchange of literary materials, must have taken place between the Normans and the Welsh, as well as between these last and their brethren of Armorica, who stood in the same relation as themselves to the sovereigns of this country while dukes of Normandy: and the Cymric and Breton bards, following their respective lords to the court of a common sovereign, had every opportunity of comparing the traditional fables of their ancestors, and of imparting them to the French minstrels with whom they associated. But, as there is reason to believe that the British lays were seldom if ever committed to writing, it might be expected that different minstrels would tell the same story with some variations; that, unable to retain in their memory the whole of a long narrative, they would carry off, in the first instance, detached

adventures, which they would afterwards connect as well as they were able; and that a system of traditional history, thus imperfectly preserved through the medium of a very loose translation, and already involved in much geographical and chronological confusion, would assume the fabulous appearance which we find in the French narratives called romances.

It has been necessary to follow, thus far, the history of the Norman minstrels, because it is certainly to them that we are indebted for the greater part of the romance histories now extant, which were afterwards avowedly translated by our English versifiers. But a very elegant and accurate writer has lately shown that this, though generally, is not universally true; and that a small number of our earliest metrical tales were, most probably, first exhibited in an English dress, and then translated, or rather imitated, by French minstrels. As Mr. Scott's* opinions always deserve attention, it may be proper to lay before the reader a short outline of the reasoning by which they are established.

It will be remembered that, during more than two centuries after the arrival of the Saxons, the whole western coast of this island, from the extremity of Cornwall to the river Clyde, continued to be occupied by the Britons, and that the conquest of Lancashire, about 670, first effectually severed the northern tribes of Cumbria and Strathclyde from all intercourse with those of modern Wales. This northern district, comprising the Roman provinces of Valentia and part of Maxima, had been more thickly occupied by the armies, and perhaps more civilized by the arts of Rome than any other part of Britain. It gave birth to Aneurin, Merlin, and Llywarch-Hen, the most ancient and celebrated of the Welsh poets; it produced Bede and Adamnan, the earliest of the Saxon historians; and continued for ages to retain its literary superiority. Of its history very little is known,—except that, being defended by the strong posts of Dunbarton and Stirling, and in part by the celebrated barrier against the Picts, still known by the name of the Catrail, or war-dyke, the small

* Since so well known as Sir Walter Scott. It must, however, be remarked that the arguments and deductions which follow, are not always satisfactory, and especially the notion of the priority of the northern dialect and of the Scottish origin of modern English, is altogether incorrect.

kingdom of Strathclyde maintained its independence, during several centuries, against the Saxons of Northumbria, as well as against the separate efforts of the Scottish and Pictish sovereigns. But when these kingdoms became united in the person of Kenneth, about the year 843, it is probable that these Britons, though for a short time protected by Athelstan, became permanently tributary to Scotland; still, however, retaining their language and manners, and even their nominal sovereigns,—the last of whom, Ewen the Bald, attended Malcolm II. in 1018 to the battle of Carrum, against the Northumbrians. The British kingdom or principality of Cumberland, comprising the present shires of Cumberland, Westmoreland, and part of Lancashire, had been previously ceded to Scotland, as a sort of fief, about the middle of the tenth century; and in the beginning of the twelfth the earldom of Northumberland, of nearly the same extent as the present county, came by marriage to David, earl of Cumberland, youngest son of Malcolm III., who thus united to the territories of the Picts and Scots nearly all those which had been possessed by the Angles of Bernicia, and by the Britons of Cumbria and Strathclyde.

We must add that many Norman barons, disgusted by the conduct of William the Conqueror, retired to the court of Malcolm, where they were liberally entertained; that his sons were twice (in 1094 and 1097) assisted by Anglo-Norman armies in their contest with the usurper, Donald Bane; and that at the battle of the Standard, most of David's men at arms are expressly stated to have been Normans. Scotland therefore, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, contained a still greater variety of inhabitants than England; but the several nations were placed, in the two countries, under very different circumstances.

In England, the possession of the soil had been wrested from the natives by the Saxons, after a very long and bloody struggle, maintained on both sides with inveterate animosity; and it is remarkable that, in consequence of the violent and intolerant character of Austin, the apostle of the Saxons, their conversion to Christianity had inflamed, instead of softening, the rancour of the rival nations. After the Norman conquest, the Saxons long ceased to have a political existence; being ed out in minute subdivisions, with few means of com-

municating with each other, and blindly subservient to their respective masters. In Scotland, on the contrary, the Scots and Picts, after being frequently connected by such alliances as are compatible with a savage state of society, and engaging as friends in a long succession of predatory wars against the Romans, the Britons, and the Saxons, were finally amalgamated, after a short contest for the sovereignty, by Kenneth, who had pretensions to the crown of both nations; after which their joint forces successively overpowered the hostile tribes of Britons and Saxons within their reach. Neither religious differences nor mortifying political distinctions* appear to have prevailed among the people thus connected by their obedience to a common sovereign. It is probable, indeed, that they long continued to use their distinct languages, and to retain their appropriate laws and customs; but that this was chiefly owing to their geographical boundaries, and to the paucity of their wants, which prevented a frequent intercourse. They were separated by their general barbarism, not by their reciprocal animosity. When, therefore, these impediments were in a great measure removed by Malcolm III., who transferred the seat of government from the Scottish to the Saxon part of his dominions, a language, in which the Saxon, more or less modified by an admixture of the British, and perhaps of the French, was predominant, could not fail of being formed; and it was likely to acquire a certain degree of perfection much sooner than the English of the south, which was gradually developed under far less auspicious circumstances.

This priority of the northern to the southern English dialect is proved by a passage of Robert de Brunne, which had been hitherto misunderstood, and which Scott has happily

* There is, in the curious old law book called "Regiam Majestatem," a law called "de Cro," (lib. iv. c. 36), regulating the *assythment* to be paid by a homicide, according to the rank of the person slain. Skene says that these laws are consuetudinary; that he has seen them written *Gallice* (in French?), and that they are entitled *Leges inter Brettos et Scotos*. They contain many Celtic or British terms, and so do various old charters respecting Cumberland and Dumfries-shire. This insertion of British customs in feudal investitures strongly argues a mixture of the people. With respect to religion, which the Picts received from the Scots or Irish, the utmost harmony seems to have prevailed within the northern frontier.

elucidated by exhibiting, in the romance of Sir Tristran composed by Thomas of Erceldoun, a specimen of the quair stanza and elaborate and artificial style attributed by th historian to that poet and to his countryman Kendal. He ha also shown, by a reference to ancient charters, that th Scottish minstrels of this early period enjoyed all the privileg and distinctions possessed by the Norman trouveurs, whoı they nearly rivalled in the arts of narration, and over whoı they possessed one manifest advantage in their familia acquaintance with the usual scenes of chivalry. Carlisle, a we learn from Froissart, was the Carduel of romance, th favourite seat of Arthur; and between that place and Penryt is his "round table," which, like his "seat" and his "oven, still records his memory. Bamborough Castle, as we lear from Knighton, was the "chastel orgueilleux," and Berwic the "château de la joyeuse garde," the favourite habitation (Sir Launcelot. Ettrick-forest, the Sylva Caledonia belove by Merlin, whose remains are supposed to have been burie at Drummelziar, was included in the territories of Urien ar Ywain. Galloway, according to Whitaker, was the pat mony of the celebrated Gawain. At Stowe, in the vale of t Gala (the Wedale, or vallis sanctus of Nennius), a few mi above Melrose, was the church of St. Mary's, where Arthur the British historian assures us, deposited a piece of the t cross; and at Meigle in Angus, between Coupar and For tradition still points out the tomb of "Dame Ganore," beautiful Guenever. The Scottish minstrels, therefore, surrounded by the memorials of romance, and having access to the traditionary tales of Strathclyde and Cumb were likely to be considered as the most authentic deposit of those narratives; and accordingly Thomas of Erceldc cited in this character by a French minstrel, of whose Sir Tristram two valuable MS. fragments are preser Douce's collection at Oxford.† Another Thomas, o

* The intercourse between the Cymric and Saxon tribes was likely to affect the music than the poetry of the latter; and S with great appearance of probability, attributed to this circums analogy between the Northumbrian and Welsh modes of singing, by Giraldus Cambrensis.

† The Fragments of the French and Anglo-Norman rom Tristan have been published by Pickering (edited by F. Mich

pose, will be accepted as his excuse for the
the preceding pages.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

PETRUS ALPHONSUS.

THE following short, but accurate, analysis of this very curious work was furnished by the late Mr. Douce.

There is a copy of the original Latin work entitled "Alphonsus de Clericali Disciplina," in the British Museum, but it is very defective at the end. There are also two French metrical versions of the same (MSS. Harl. 527 and 4338),* the former wanting a leaf at the end, and the latter imperfect in the middle; but they vary considerably in the number and arrangement of the stories, which are generally more ample, and perhaps better told, than in the Latin copy. It should seem, therefore, that the French translator has taken some liberties in attempting to improve his original, or that he has used a more perfect copy than that which is here mentioned; but this must remain a question till other Latin copies shall be examined, some of which may possibly be preserved in the National Library at Paris.

With respect to the French MS. of *Pierre Anfors* (who is thus named in both the Harleian MSS.), which existed at St. Germain des Prés, No. 1830, and has been partly edited, and partly abridged, by Barbazan, under the title of "Castoiement d'un Père à son Fils," we must suppose that it was either very imperfect, or very inattentively examined by the

* Editions of Petrus Alphonsus have been recently published on the Continent.

Arabian tongue Lucamam, to his son, illustrated
les, which are arranged in the following order.
y of the false friend and of the dead calf in a sa
Le Grand, fabl. 3. 255.—It is remarkable that
id, as well as Barbazan, seems to have known nothi
t Petrus Alphonsus, whom he classes, under his Frenc
name of Pierre Anfors, amongst the Norman fableou
is story occurs in the Gesta Romanorum, chap. 129
well-known tale of the two merchants of Bald
dad) and of Egypt. See Le Grand, fabl. 3. 262; Bc
, day x. nov. 8; Gesta Rom. ch. 170.
mule who was ashamed of his father, the ass, a
ted of his grandfather, who was a horse.
man, the ungrateful serpent, and the fox. Here tl
ent is found tied to a tree, and by the fox's cunnii
up again, and not put into a sack, as elsewhere relate
Gest. Rom. ch. 174; Dir. Hum. Vitæ, or Pilpay.
oet claims, as a reward for his verses, that the kir
ld appoint him his porter, with liberty to demand
y of every hunch-back, another of every leper, anoth
ery one-eyed man, &c. A crooked man comes to tl
and, having refused to pay the first penny, is prov
ve all the other defects, and taxed accordingly. S
rand, fabl. 3. 252; Gesta Rom. ch. 257.
n, in opposition to the advice of his friend, goes in
se where people were drinking and rioting. A robb
refuge amongst them, and all the company are hange
persons hear a woman singing, &c.—Very silly tal
ot worth notice.
e-dresser wounds his eye while working in his vin
In the mean time his wife was occupied by h
t. On the husband's return, she

9. An artful old woman conceals her daughter's gallant from the husband, by spreading a sheet before his eyes in such a manner as to give the lover an opportunity of escaping. Le Grand, fabl. 4. 160; Gesta Rom. ch. 122, &c., &c.
10. A nearly similar story, in which the mother puts a sword into the hands of the gallant, and persuades the husband, when he returns, that the young man had taken refuge from the pursuit of three assassins. Le Grand, fabl. 4. 160, &c., &c.
11. A king requires his minstrel to tell him a long story that will lull him to sleep. The minstrel begins a tale concerning a countryman who had to cross a ferry with 600 sheep by two at a time, and then falls asleep in the midst of his story. The king wakens him; but the minstrel requests that the countryman may be allowed to ferry over the sheep before he resumes his narrative. Le Grand, fabl. 1. 210, and in Don Quixote.
12. Stratagem of an old woman in favour of a young gallant. She persuades his mistress, who had rejected his addresses, that her little dog was formerly a woman, and so transformed in consequence of her cruelty to her lover. The MSS. vary much in this story. Le Grand, fabl. 3. 459; Gest. Rom. ch. 28.
13. A woman, shut up in a tower by a jealous husband, throws a stone into a well. The man, supposing that his wife had drowned herself, runs to her relief. She escapes in the mean time, and contrives in her turn to shut him into the tower. See the Seven Wise Masters; Boccace, day vii. nov. 4; Le Grand, fabl. 3. 143; Molière, George Dandin.
14. By the stratagem of an old woman, a man recovers a sum of money which he had left in the hands of a treacherous friend, who refused to restore it. A person is instructed to procure some strong gilt trunks, to fill them with stones, and to offer to deposit the pretended treasure in the hands of the defrauder. While this negotiation is going on, the claimant is sent to repeat his demand; which the false friend now complies with, lest any suspicion should fall on his honesty in the presence of the new dupe. Le Grand, fabl. 3. 282; Gesta Rom. ch. 118; Boccace, day viii. nov. 10; Arab. N. Ent.

15. A man deposits ten casks of oil in the house of a neighbour, whom he afterwards accuses of having stolen a part of it. By the sagacity of a philosopher, who causes the dregs of the oil to be examined, the knavery of the accuser is discovered. Le Grand, fabl. 3. 19.
16. A man loses a purse of gold, containing a golden serpent with eyes of hyacinth; and endeavours to defraud a poor man who had found it of the promised reward, by asserting that the purse contained two serpents, &c. The dispute being referred to a philosopher, the purse is adjudged to the finder. Le Grand, fabl. 3. 24.
17. A countryman advises some travellers respecting the road, &c., &c.
18. Two citizens and a countryman, travelling to Mecca, are reduced to a single loaf. It is agreed that he who dreams the best dream shall eat it. The countryman disappoints the intended fraud of his companions, and gets the loaf. Le Grand, fabl. 2. 328; Gest. Rom. ch. 106; also in p. 51 of the "Historia Jeschuæ Nazareni," a blasphemous life of J. C., of Jewish invention.
19. Story of some cloth-cutters, and of the apprentice Bedwi, who procures his master a beating for defrauding him of his honey. Le Grand, fabl. 3. 426.
20. Two minstrels being at a royal feast, one of them places all his bones on the plate of his companion, and complains to the king that he had eaten all the meat which belonged to them. The other retorts, by asserting that the first had devoured meat, bones, and all. See Gladwin's Moonshee; Le Grand, fabl. 3. 95.
21. Story of the countryman and of the bird who promised him three things for his liberty. This is Le Grand's "Lai de l'Oiselet," 3. 430; Way's "Lay of the little Bird;" Lydgate's "The Chorle and the Bird."
22. Story of the wolf, the countryman, and the fox. The wolf is left in a well, looking after a supposed cheese made by the moon's image on the water.—Imitated by La Fontaine in his fables.
23. A thief breaks his neck by catching at a ray of the moon. In the Directorium Humanæ Vitæ, i. e. the Latin version from the Hebrew of Pilpay. Le Grand, fabl. 4. 288; Gesta Rom. ch. 136.

24. A man desires his servant to shut the door. The servant, who is a very idle fellow, affirms that it is shut. In the morning, being ordered to open it, he says that, having foreseen this wish, he had neglected to shut it. The master now perceives his laziness, and orders him, the sun being risen, to get up and go to his work. He now asks for victuals, and, being asked if he was accustomed to eat during the night, replies, "If it be night, suffer me to sleep." Another time his master orders him to rise in the night to discover whether it rained. He calls the dog, who lay at the door, and finding its feet dry, pronounces that the weather is fair. Being asked if the fire was extinguished, he calls the cat, and, finding her cold, answers in the affirmative.—Story 60 in Gladwin's Moonshee; In Melandri Jocor. centur. 2. 210.
25. The same servant, who is a negro named Maimundus, relates to his master a curious story exhibiting a climax of calamities. See it in Le Grand, fabl. 4. 119.
26. Account of Socrates, who retired from the world and lived in a tub, the back of which he turned to the wind and rain, and the front to the sun. Some hunters come by and laugh at him while he is lousing himself. He says to them, as they stand between him and the sun, "What ye cannot give do not take away."—They insult him again, and endeavour to remove his habitation; but, not being able to effect it, desire him to remove his vile carcase, that he might not offend the king, who was coming that way to hunt. He tells them that "their lord is not his lord, but rather the servant of his servant." The king converses with him, and he explains his saying, &c.

These are all that the Latin copy contains. The following are supplied from the French.

27. A thief breaks into a house, and, finding more treasure than he can carry away, picks out the best part. He forgets himself, and remains till day-break, when he is secured by the people of the house.
28. Story of Abraham entertaining the angels.
29. A philosopher finds a tomb inscribed "As I am, you shall be, &c."
30. A woman, in the absence of her husband, sends for her gallant, and, wishing to bathe with him (a sort of prelude

in ancient times to amorous dalliance), borrows her neighbour's bathing-tub. See Le Grand, fabl. 3. 455.

31. A merchant goes on a visit to his brother, who is steward to a certain king. The monarch receives the merchant with great politeness, and offers him a considerable farm; which he refuses, on finding that the king was in the habit of spending all his revenues in time of peace, and, consequently, in case of war, could only defend himself by levying heavy contributions on his subjects.

Besides the foregoing, there are several tales from Alphonsus, collected together at the end of the earliest collection of the Æsopian fables now extant. It is the work translated by Caxton, is in Latin, and without date.

No. II.

MARIE'S LAYS.

A LATE critic (Mr. Ritson) has denied the Armorican origin of these lays; but it is quite needless to discuss his opinions concerning a work which he had manifestly neglected to read or was unable to understand. It will be shorter and less tiresome to lay before the reader an abstract of the whole collection, which is in many respects interesting, because it was certainly written in this country; was never printed; and is known to exist only in one manuscript, viz. Harl. MSS. No. 978.

The lays are twelve in number, and are arranged in the following order: 1. Guigemar; 2. Equitan; 3. Lai le Freisne; 4. Bisclaveret; 5. Lanval; 6. Les deux Amans; 7. Ywonec; 8. Laustic; 9. Milun; 10. Chativel; 11. Chevrefoil; and 12. Eliduc.*

About 56 lines at the beginning of the work are intended as a general prologue, and 26 more form the introduction to the first lay. This prefatory matter is written in a style of considerable obscurity, which was perhaps intentional, because the author defends it by the example of the ancients, and quotes Priscian as her authority. But the doctrine which she means to inculcate is, that those who possess talents are bound to employ them, and that study is always good, as a preservative from vice and from affliction. She tells us that she had therefore formed a plan of translating, from Latin into romance, *some good history;* but found that her project had been anticipated by others. She then thought of the numerous lays which she *had heard, and had carefully treasured in*

* All these have been printed in Roquefort's edition of the works of Marie.

her memory. These, she was sure, must be new to the generality of her readers; and in this confidence she offers to the king (probably our Henry III.) the fruits of her labours. After complaining that she has met with envy and persecution where she deserved praise, she declares her intention *to* persevere, and to relate, as briefly as possible, such stories as she *knows to be true*, and to have been *formed into lays by the Britons*.

Les contes ke jeo sai *verrais*,
Dunt li Bretun ont fait les lais,
Vus conterai asez briefment, &c.

No. 1. Guigemar.

This lay, consisting of 942 lines, having been faithfully analysed by Le Grand, and beautifully translated by Way, requires no further notice in this place.

No. 2. Equitan. 282 lines.

Equitan was a prince of Bretagne, who was so passionately attached to the amusements of chivalry, that he cared neither for business nor gallantry. Nothing but the necessity of heading his troops could withdraw him from the pleasures of hunting and hawking; and the whole business of the state was managed by his steward, a man of equal loyalty and experience. Unfortunately this steward had married a beautiful wife. The prince heard her much praised; admitted that these praises were deserved; and insensibly began to think his hunting and hawking most agreeable when it conducted him, at the end of the day, to his steward's castle, where he had a natural opportunity of seeing and conversing with the lovely hostess. Equitan was overcome by his passion almost before he was conscious of being in love: he began by reflecting with shame and remorse on the baseness of the part which he was preparing to act, and ended, as usual, by determining not to endure the misery of privation and disappointment, if he could succeed in seducing the wife of his friend. Having devised, in the course of a sleepless night, as many arguments as were necessary to satisfy his own morality, and formed a plan for securing a long interview with his mistress, he set off for the chase; returned after a short time under pretence of a sudden indisposition;

and, retiring to his bed, sent to request a visit from the lady, who perhaps was not much surprised at receiving from the invalid a very long and eloquent declaration of his passion. To this she replied, in the first instance, by very proper expostulations; but when at length the enamoured Equitan assured her, with the utmost solemnity, that, if her husband were out of the way, he would gladly make her the partner of his throne, she suddenly gave way to the splendid offer, and proposed, with his assistance, to destroy the steward so artfully that neither actor in the plot should incur the slightest suspicion. Equitan, far from being startled by this atrocious proposition, readily assured her of his concurrence, and she continued thus: "Return, sir, for the present, to your court; then come to pursue your diversion in this forest, and again take up your abode under our roof. You must once more pretend to be indisposed; cause yourself to be blooded; and on the third day order a bath, and invite my husband to bathe and afterwards to dine with you. I will take care to prepare the bathing-tubs. That which I destine for him shall be filled with boiling water, so that he will be instantly scalded to death; after which you will call in your attendants and his, and explain to them that your affectionate steward had suddenly expired in the act of bathing." The prince readily consented to take his part in this diabolical plot, and, at the end of three months, every thing was arranged for its execution. The baths were actually filled and placed before the respective beds; but the steward, who had risen early in the morning, for some purpose of business or amusement, happening to stay rather beyond the appointed time, the two lovers had met during his absence, and, forgetting that their guilty project was not yet accomplished, had proceeded to satisfy their mutual passion. A maid was stationed at the door, near which stood the fatal bath; but the husband returning with precipitation suddenly forced open the door, in spite of her feeble opposition, and discovered his wife in the arms of Equitan. The prince, under the first impulse of surprise and remorse, started from the bed at the appearance of his steward, and, heedlessly plunging into the boiling bath, was instantly suffocated or scalded to death. The husband, almost at the same instant, seized on the guilty partner of his bed, and threw her headlong after her paramour. Thus were the

wicked punished by the means which they had devised for the destruction of another; and such is the substance of the lay which was composed by the Bretons under the name of Equitan.

No. 3. Lai le Freisne. 528 lines.

This lay was translated into English by some unknown but nearly contemporary writer; and this version, which still exists in the Auchinleck MS., having been kindly communicated to me by my friend Sir Walter Scott, it will be found among the miscellaneous romances of the present collection.

No. 4. Bisclaveret. 318 lines.

Our author informs us that this is the Breton name for an animal which the Normans call Garwolf; and adds that formerly men were frequently metamorphosed into this beast, and during such times were the most ferocious and destructive of the inhabitants of the forest.* She then proceeds to her story.

There lived formerly in Bretagne a baron who was comely in his person, wise, courteous, adored by his neighbours, much beloved by his sovereign, and married to a noble and beautiful lady, for whom he felt the warmest affection, which she appeared to return with equal sincerity. But she had observed that her husband was regularly absent during three

* It seems that this superstition still remains in Bretagne. "Dans l'opinion des Bretons, ces mêmes hommes se revêtent, pendant la nuit, de peaux de loups, et en prennent quelquefois la forme, pour se trouver à des assemblées où le démon est supposé présider. Ce que l'on dit ici des déguisements et des courses nocturnes de ces prétendus *hommes-loups, dont l'espèce n'est pas encore entièrement éteinte dans l'ancienne Armorique*, nous rappelle ce que l'histoire rapporte des *lycantrophes* d'Irlande —et ce qu'Herodote dit des *Neures*." (Origines Gauloises par La Tour d'Auvergne Corret. cap. 2.) Mr. Walker, in his historical memoirs of the Irish bards, quotes the following lines from a poem descriptive of the manners of the Irish:

> The next strange story which his ears
> Receiv'd, was of some wolves and bears,
> Who once were men of worth and fame,
> But, by enchantment, brutes became;
> And would, if tales sing truth, obtain
> Their former human shape again.

days in the week, and, suspecting that there must be something mysterious in this periodical disappearance, resolved, if possible, to extort the secret. She redoubled her expressions of tenderness; bitterly lamented her frequent intervals of widowed solitude; and, affecting to be persuaded that he bestowed on a mistress the many hours of separation from his wife, earnestly conjured him to calm her apprehensions by the disclosure of the truth. The good baron warmly conjured her in his turn to desist from an inquiry which would only lead to their permanent separation, and to the extinction of all her fondness; but her tears and blandishments prevailed, and he confessed that, during half the week, he became a Bisclaveret. The lady, though she felt a secret horror at finding herself the wife of a wolf, dissembled her disgust, and pursued her inquiry. Were his clothes also transformed? or was he naked at the time of his transformation? The baron answered, that he was naked. Where then did he leave his dress? To this question he endeavoured to avoid giving an answer, declaring that, should this secret be discovered, he would be condemned to wear his brute form through life; and observing that, if she loved him, she could have no wish to learn that of which the knowledge would be useless to her, while its disclosure would be fatal to him. But obstinacy is always an over-match for rational argument. The wife still insisted; and the good-natured husband ultimately told that, "by the side of an old chapel, situated on the road to the thickest part of the forest, was a bush which overhung and concealed an excavated stone, in which he constantly deposited his garments." The wife, being now mistress of the baron's fate, quickly formed her decision. She sent for a gallant, whose love she had hitherto rejected; offered him immediate possession of her person; taught him the means of confirming her husband's metamorphosis; and, when the baron's friends had finally renounced all hopes of his return, married her new favourite, and conveyed to him a large inheritance, the fruit of their joint treachery. In about a year the king went to hunt in the forest, and, after a chase which lasted the whole day, had nearly run down the unfortunate Bisclaveret; when the persecuted animal, rushing from the thicket, and running straight up to the king, seized his stirrup with his fore-paw, began to lick his feet, and with the most piteous whinings to implore

his protection. The king was, at first, dreadfully frightened; but his fear soon gave way to pity and admiration. He called his attendants to witness the miracle; ordered the dogs to be whipped off; solemnly took the brute under his royal protection; and returned to his palace, closely followed by his savage attendant. Bisclaveret soon became an universal favourite; he was fed with the greatest care, slept in the royal apartments, and, though indefatigable in his attentions to the king his master, returned with gratitude the caresses of the courtiers, who admired and esteemed, without envying, his superior intelligence and accomplishments. At length the king having thought fit to summon a plenar court, his barons flocked from all quarters to the festival, and, among the rest, the husband of the false lady. No one had thought of paying the least attention to Bisclaveret, whose gentleness was even more remarkable than his sagacity: but no sooner did the knight make his appearance than the animal attacked him with the greatest fury, and was scarcely prevented, even by the interposition of the king himself, from tearing him to pieces. The same scene occurred a second time, and occasioned infinite surprise; for all agreed that Bisclaveret must have had good reasons for his conduct, though it was not easy to conjecture what injury he had received. Not long after this the king went to hunt in the forest where the animal had been found; and the wicked wife, as lady of the manor, having sent before her a magnificent present, set forth to pay her court to her sovereign. Bisclaveret saw her approach, flew upon her, and instantly tore her nose from her face. This act of discourtesy to a lady excited universal indignation: even the king himself took part against his favourite, who would have been punished with instant death, but for the interference of an aged counsellor. "This lady, sir," said he to the king, "was the wife of that knight whom you so tenderly loved, and whose unaccountable disappearance you have so long regretted. The baron whom Bisclaveret first assaulted is her present husband. Your favourite animal, whose gentleness and sagacity appear nearly human, becomes ferocious only on the appearance of these two. There is certainly some mystery in this, which the lady, if imprisoned and interrogated, could probably discover. Britany is the country of wonders—

Mainte merveille avum veu
Qui en Bretaigne est avenu."

In compliance with this advice the lady was put in close confinement, the whole secret extorted, and the clothes of Bisclaveret duly restored. But when they were brought before him, the animal appeared to survey them with listlessness and inattention; and the king had again recourse to his sapient counsellor, by whose advice they were transferred to the royal bed-chamber, where Bisclaveret was left, without witnesses, to effect, if possible, his metamorphosis. In due time the king, attended by two of his barons, repaired to the chamber, and found the knight, in his natural form, asleep on the royal bed. His master immediately embraced him with the utmost affection; restored all his estates, added more, and banished the wicked wife, together with her paramour, from the country. It is remarkable that, after her accident, she became very prolific, and bore several children, all of whom were females, and distinguished by the disagreeable singularity of being born without noses. Be assured that this adventure is strictly true, and that the lay of Bisclaveret was composed for the purpose of making it known to the latest posterity.

No. 5. Lanval. 646 lines.

For the substance of this lay, also, the reader is referred to Le Grand's collection of fabliaux, and to Way's translation.

No. 6. Les deux Amants. 242 lines.

In Neustria, now called Normandy, is a single mountain of unusual height and verdure, called the mountain "of the two lovers," in consequence of an adventure to which it gave rise, and of which the Bretons have formed a lay. Close to it are the remains of a city, now reduced to a few houses, but formerly opulent, founded by the king of the Pistreins, whence it was called Depistreins, and the neighbouring valley Val de Pistre. This king had an only daughter, whom he loved with such tenderness that he could not bear to be separated from her. With a view to check the pursuits of the lovers, whom her beauty and accomplishments attracted, he published a decree, that her hand should never be granted but to a suitor

who should be able to carry her, without resting, from the bottom to the top of the adjoining mountain. Many attempted the enterprise, for presumption is common; none achieved it, because its execution was barely possible. The suitors disappeared, one by one, and the beautiful princess seemed doomed to eternal celibacy. There was one youth, the son of a neighbouring baron, who was a favourite with the king and with the whole court, and whose assiduities, which were dictated by an unconquerable and sincere passion, ultimately gained the lady's warmest affections. His discretion was such, that their mutual affection was long a secret to all the world: but this discretion became, at length, almost intolerable; and the youth, hopeless of fulfilling the condition which alone could obtain the hand of his mistress, earnestly conjured her to fly with him from her father's court. To this, however, she would not consent; but suggested a mode of accomplishing their wishes more compatible with her filial piety. "I have," said she, "a rich aunt who resides and has studied during thirty years at Salerno. In that celebrated school she has so completely acquired the art of medicine; has learned so many *salves* and drugs; has so studied *herbs* and *roots*, that she will be enabled to compose for you *electuaries* and *drinks* capable of communicating to you the degree of vigour necessary for the accomplishment of the trial prescribed by my father's law. To her you shall bear a letter from me, and at your return you shall demand me from the king on the terms to which he has himself assented." The lover thanked her; went home; provided the necessary assortment of rich clothes, and other merchandize, of palfreys, beasts of burthen, and attendants, and set off for Salerno. His mission was perfectly successful. The good aunt's electuaries rendered him much more athletic than before; and he brought with him, in a small vial, an elixir capable of instantly restoring the strength at the moment of complete exhaustion. He therefore returned full of confidence, and claimed the trial; which was granted. The king, having summoned all his principal vassals to behold the ceremony, conducted his daughter into the great plain on the banks of the Seine, and found the youth already stationed at the foot of the mountain. The lovely princess had scarcely tasted food since the departure of her lover; she would gladly have wasted herself to the lightness

of air for the purpose of diminishing his labour. Of clothes she wore none, excepting a shift which closely enveloped her. Her lover catching her up with one hand, and bearing the precious vial in the other, appeared perfectly unconscious of the burthen, and bore her, with the rapidity of lightning, more than half way up the mountain: but here the princess perceived that his breath began to fail, and earnestly conjured him to have recourse to his medicine. He replied that he was still full of vigour; that he was too much within sight of the multitude below; that their cries, on seeing him stop even for an instant, would annoy and dishearten him; and that, while able to proceed alone, he would not appeal to preternatural assistance. At two thirds of the height the princess felt him totter under the weight, and again repeated her earnest entreaties. But he no longer heard or listened to her: exerting his whole remains of strength, he staggered with her to the top, still bearing the untasted vial in his hand, and dropped dead on the ground. His mistress, thinking that he had only fainted, knelt down by his side, applied the elixir to his lips, but found that life had left him. She then dashed the vial on the ground, uttered a dreadful shriek, threw herself on the body, and instantly expired. The king and his attendants, much surprised at not seeing the lovers return, ascended the mountain, and found the youth fast locked in the arms of the princess. By command of her father they were buried on the spot in a marble coffin, and the mountain still retains the name of "the two lovers." Around their tomb the earth exhibits an unceasing verdure; and hither the whole country resort for the most valuable herbs employed in medicine, which owe their origin to the contents of the marvellous vial.

No. 7. Ywonec. 552 lines.

There lived once in Britain an old knight of great opulence, who was lord of Caerwent, a city situated on the river Duglas. He had married, when far advanced in years, a young wife of high birth and transcendent beauty, in hopes of begetting an heir to his great estates; but when, at the end of seven years, this hope was frustrated, he locked her up in his strong castle, under the care of his sister, an aged widow lady of great devotion and asperity of temper. His own amusements

were confined to the chase; those of his sister to thumbing her psalter, and chanting its contents: the young lady had no solace but in her tears. One morning in April, when the birds begin to sing the songs of love, the old gentleman had risen early, and awakened his sister, who carefully shut the doors after him while he set forth for the woods, and his young wife began her usual lamentations. She execrated the hour when she was born, and the fatal avarice of her parents, for having united her to an old jealous tyrant, who was afraid of his own shadow, and debarred her even from going to church. She had heard that the country round her prison was once famed for adventures; that young and gallant knights used to meet, without censure or impediment, beautiful and affectionate mistresses. But her lot was endless misery (for her tyrant was certainly immortal), unless the supreme Disposer of events should, by some miracle, suspend the listlessness of her present existence. She had scarcely finished this ejaculation, when the shadow of a large bird, which nearly intercepted all the light proceeding from the narrow window of her room, arrested her attention. The bird, a falcon of the largest size, flew into the chamber, and perched at the foot of her bed. While she gazed on the falcon, it gradually assumed the figure of a young and handsome knight. She started, changed colour, and drew a veil over her face, but still gazed and listened with some fear, much astonishment, but more pleasure. The knight soon broke silence. He begged her not to be alarmed; confessed that his mode of visiting was new, and rather mysterious; but that a falcon was a gentle and noble bird, whose figure ought not to create suspicion. He was a neighbouring prince, who had long known and loved her, and wished to dedicate the remainder of his days to her service, if she would accept him as her lover. The lady, gradually removing her veil, ingenuously told him that he was much handsomer, and apparently more amiable, than any man she had ever seen; and that she should be happy to accept him as lover, if such a connection could be legitimate, and if he believed in God. The prince highly approved of this scruple; entered at large into the articles of his creed; and concluded by advising that she should feign herself sick; send for her chaplain; and direct him to bring the host; "when," said he, "I will assume your appearance, and

: the sacrament in your stead." The lady was of course
d with this proposal; and, when the old woman came
summoned her to rise, she professed to be at the point
th, and entreated the immediate assistance of the chap-
Such a request, in the absence of her lord, could not
ularly granted: but a few screams and a fainting fit
ed the old lady's doubts, and she hobbled off in search
chaplain, who immediately brought the host; and Mul-
ec (for such was the name of the falcon-prince), assum-
e appearance of his mistress, went through the sacred
ony with becoming devotion. The lovers now con-
l themselves as man and wife, and acted accordingly.
dy's supposed illness enabled the prince to protract his
but at length the moment of separation came, and the
xpressed her wish for the frequent repetition of their
iews.—"Nothing is so easy," said Muldumarec: "when-
ou express an ardent wish to see me, I shall instantly
h you. But beware of that old woman. She will pro-
discover our secret, and betray it to her brother; and I
nce to you that the moment of discovery will be that of
ath." With these words he flew off. His mistress,
ll her caution, was unable to conceal entirely the com-
change in her sensations. Her solitude, formerly so
ie, was become the source of her greatest delight; her
, so long neglected, again became on object of her soli-
; and her artful and jealous husband, on his return from
ase, often discovered in her features the traces of a
nous satisfaction, of which his conscience told him that
s not the author. His vague suspicions were, after a
communicated to his sister; but she, who thought her-
ie young lady's sole companion, and could not reproach
f with any enlivening qualities, was equally unable to
nt for her pupil's contented demeanour. At length the
s husband commanded her to conceal herself in his
apartment during his absence, to watch indefatigably,
report whatever she should discover. His orders were
ually obeyed, and the result was a full confirmation of
s suspicions. He now exerted himself in devising the
of vengeance. He secretly prepared and placed before
tal window a sort of trap composed of well-sharpened
rrows, and, rising long before day, set off on his usual

occupation. The old lady, after carefully shutting the doors after him, returned to her bed to sleep till day-break; and his wife, awakened at this unusual hour, could not refrain from uttering an ardent wish for the company of her dear Muldumarec. Her faithful prince was instantly at her side; but he had received his death wound, and she found herself sprinkled with his blood. Overpowered by fear and surprise, she could scarcely hear him say that he died for her, and that his prophecy was accomplished. She fainted in his arms; but he conjured her to preserve her life, and announced to her that she was pregnant with a son, whom she must call Ywonec, and who was destined to be the avenger of both his parents. He then hastily departed through an open and unguarded window. His mistress, though in her shift, uttering a piteous scream, threw herself out of the same window, and pursued his flight by the trace of his blood, which the first beams of morning enabled her to distinguish. At length she arrived at a thick wood, where she was soon surrounded with darkness; but she pursued the beaten track, and emerged into a meadow; where recovering the trace of the blood, she pursued it to a large city of unexampled magnificence, which she entered, and proceeded to the palace. No one was visible in the streets. In the first apartment she found a knight asleep. She knew him not, and passed on to the next, where she found a second knight equally unknown to her. She entered the third room; and on a bed which almost dazzled her by the splendour of its ornaments, and which was surrounded by numerous torches blazing in golden candlesticks, recognised her dear Muldumarec, and sunk almost lifeless with fatigue and terror by his side. Though very near to his last moments, he was still able to comfort and instruct her. He adjured her to return instantly, while she could escape the notice of his subjects, to whom, as their story was known, she would be particularly obnoxious. He gave her a ring, in virtue of which he assured her that she would in future escape the persecution and even the jealousy of her husband. He then put into her hands his sword, with directions that it should never be touched by man till his son should be dubbed a knight; when it must be delivered to him with due solemnity, near the tomb of his father, at the moment when he should learn the secret of his birth, and the miseries produced by it to his

parents. She would then see the first use to which her boy would put it. The prince had now nearly spent his last breath in the service of his beloved mistress; he could only instruct her by signs to put on a magnificent robe which lay near him, and to hasten her departure. She staggered through the town, arrived in the solitary fields, heard the distant knell which announced her lover's death, and sunk exhausted to the ground. At length the air revived her; she slowly renewed her journey, and returned to her castle, which, by virtue of her ring, she entered undisturbed. Till the birth of her son, and from that time to the conclusion of his education, she lived in silent anguish, and in the patient expectation of the day of vengeance. The young Ywonec, by his beauty and address, recalled to her mind the loved image of his father; and at length she beheld him, with a throbbing heart, invested admist the applause of all the spectators with the dignity of knighthood. The hour of retribution was now fast approaching. At the feast of St. Aaron, in the same year, the baron was summoned with his family to Caerleon, where the festival was held with great solemnity. In the course of their journey they stopped for the night in a spacious abbey, where they were received with the greatest hospitality. The good abbot, for the purpose of detaining his guests during another day, exhibited to them the whole of the apartments, the dormitory, the refectory, and the chapter-house, in which they beheld a vast sepulchral monument, covered with a superb pall, fringed with gold, and surrounded by twenty waxen tapers in golden candlesticks, while a vast silver censer, constantly burning, filled the air with fumes of incense. The guests naturally inquired concerning the name and quality of the person who reposed in that splendid tomb; and were told that he was the late king of that country; the best, the handsomest, the wisest, the most courteous and liberal of mankind; that he was treacherously slain at Caerwent, for his love to the lady of that castle; that since his death his subjects had respected his dying injunctions, and reserved the crown for a son whose arrival they still expected with much anxiety. On hearing this story the lady called aloud to Ywonec,—"Fair son, thou hast heard how Providence hath conducted us hither. Here lies thy father, whom this old man slew with wickedness. I now put into thy hands the sword

of thy sire; I have kept it long enough." She then proceeded to tell him the sad adventure of his birth, and, having with much difficulty concluded her recital, fell dead on the tomb of her husband. Ywonec, almost frantic with grief and horror, instantly sacrificed his hoary step-father to the manes of his parents; and, having caused his mother to be interred with suitable honours near the body of her lover, accepted from his subjects the crown which they had reserved for the representative of a long line of royal ancestors.

No. 8. Laustic. 164 lines.

The author tells us that this lay is called in the Breton tongue Laustic,* and in "right English" the Nihtegale (nightingale). It is very well written, and contains many picturesque descriptions; besides which it breathes, throughout, that peculiar spirit of formal gallantry which prevailed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and at that time was likely to insure its popularity. But the adventure it relates is as insipid as possible. In the district of St. Malos is the town of Bon, which derives its name from the goodness of two knights who formerly dwelt in it. The one was married; the other was in love with his neighbour's wife, who returned his affection. The houses were so near, being only separated by a wall, that the lovers could easily, from the windows of their respective bedchambers, interchange their amorous glances; talk together without being overheard, and even toss to each other little presents and symbols of attachment. For the purpose of enjoying this amusement, the lady, during the warm nights of spring and summer, used to rise from her husband's side, and, throwing a mantle over her, repair to the window and stay there till near the dawn of day. The good man, much annoyed by this practice, roughly asked her what was the object which so constantly allured her from her bed, and was told that it was the sweet voice of the nightingale. Having heard this, he set all his servants to work; spread on every twig of his hazels and chesnut-trees a quantity of birdlime; and set throughout the orchard so many traps and springes, that the nightingale was shortly caught

* Eaustic is still a nightingale in the Breton language, and l'eaustic is the French manner of speaking.

by means of which it might in due time disc
itself known to its parents. This arrangemen
and succeeded. The young lady was safely
boy; the ring was hung about his neck, togeth
containing the letter; he was placed in a soft c
in the finest linen, with an embroidered pillow u
and a rich coverlid edged with sable to protect
cold. Milun, in delivering him to his atten
that during the journey he should stop seven
day, for the purpose of being washed, suckled,
and again replaced in the cradle. The nurse
servants who attended him, had been selected w
and performed their charge with fidelity; and
brian lady assured her sister, by a letter which
back by the same trusty persons, that she accept
with pleasure. This point being thus settled,
castle for a short time on some military busines
his absence the young lady's father resolved to
marriage on a neighbouring baron. She was
reduced to despair. Her lover, to whom she w
ever attached, was absent; she had no possible a
the authority of her father; to avow to her new
had happened was impossible, and to conceal
extremely difficult. But she was compelled to
marriage took place; and Milun on his return
ess distressed than his mistress, till he recolle
was still in the neighbourhood, and that he mig
ble to devise some means of procuring an in
nd a favourite swan, long accustomed to feed

e as a poacher; stated that he had just caught a fine
close to Caerleon; and that he much wished to con-
e the future intercession of the lady by presenting it to
The porter, after some hesitation, went to explore the
hamber; and, finding in it only two knights who were
t on a game of chess, returned immediately, and con-
ed the man to his lady's apartment; which, on his knock-
was opened to them. Having graciously accepted the
nt, she was going to recommend the swan to the care of
f her valets; but the messenger observing "that this was
al bird, who would only accept of food from her own
," and desiring her to caress it, she soon perceived the
, and changed colour; but, recovering herself, dismissed
nessenger with a present, and turned out her own atten-
, excepting one maid, and proceeded to examine the
erious letter. It contained the warmest protestations of
over's unalterable attachment; expressed a hope that she
t be able to point out a secure place of meeting; and
ed her an easy method of continuing the correspondence.
e swan, already tame, might, by good feeding, be easily
hed to her; after which, if debarred from meat during
days, he would when set at liberty take wing and return
s old master." After kissing the welcome letter till she
nearly obliterated its contents, she proceeded to put in
tice her lover's injunctions; and having by stealth pro-
some parchment and ink, she made an equally tender
, which, being tied round the swan's neck, was rapidly
faithfully conveyed to Milun. During twenty years the
y lovers kept up, by means of this bird, a regular cor-
ndence, and their frequent interviews were managed
a secrecy which secured them against detection. In the
time their son, after receiving an excellent education,
been dubbed a knight, and had learned from his aunt the
e of his father, and the mystery of his birth. Inflamed
a noble ambition, he resolved instantly to set off for
gn countries, and to surpass his sire in military glory.
the next day he communicated the project to his aunt,
did not fail to give him a number of instructions for his
e conduct, which, lest he should forget them, she repeated
than once, and accompanied her admonitions with such
al presents as would enable him to rival in splendour the

[illegible]t; and, though he concealed his n
known through the country by the appellati
without a peer." The fame of this youthful
reached the ears of his father. From the fi
bestriding a horse, that father had never
equal; and as he trusted that age had add
more than it had yet subtracted from his vig
prove, by the overthrow of the peerless but
that his high renown was owing to the ab
After this exploit he meant to go in quest o
departure into foreign countries had been
cated to him; and having obtained the pe
mistress, he embarked for Normandy, and th
into Bretagne. The tournaments did not be
tival of Easter. Milun, therefore, who had ar
end of winter, spent the interval in travelling
place, in exercising hospitality, and in searchi
meritorious knights, whom he attached to
liberality. At length the festival took plac
Michel, and was attended by crowds of kn
Flemish, Norman, and Breton, though by ve
Milun inquired minutely into the arms and
unknown knight, and had no difficulty in p
information. The tournament began. The t
rately acquired a manifest superiority, and bor
opposed them; but the opinions of the assembl
between the two. The strength and address
appeared invincible, yet the suppleness and
youth attracted still more admiration. E[illegible]

and hair, which were become gray with age; when the youth, bringing him back his horse, courteously requested him to remount, expressing his regret at having by his accidental victory sullied the fame of a respectable veteran. Milun, surveying him with increased admiration, discovered on his finger, while he held the rein, his own ring, and earnestly conjured him to relate his history and the names of his parents. The youth obeyed, and was proceeding to tell all he knew, when the old knight again springing from his horse, and catching him by the skirts of his coat of mail, hailed him as his son, and received him in his arms as he dismounted to request the paternal benediction. The tournament being over, they retired together amidst the tears and applauses of the assembly, and retreated to their inn, where Milun related to his son the whole series of his adventures. The young man listened till the end with respectful attention; and then exclaimed, "In faith, fair sire, I will unite you to my mother. I will kill her present husband, and you shall marry her." This being arranged, they parted for the night. On the next day they arrived at the sea; embarked; landed in Wales after a short and pleasant passage; and were proceeding to Milun's castle, when they were met by a messenger bearing a letter to Milun from his lady, in which she announced the death of her husband, and requested him to hasten his return. At this joyful news they hurried on to the lady's castle; and she had the satisfaction of being for ever united to her lover, at the same time that she embraced a son every way worthy of his accomplished parents. On this occasion, says the author, "*the ancients* made a lay which I have here set down *in writing*, and which I always relate with fresh pleasure."

No. 10. Chaitivel. 240 lines.

This lay contains few incidents; and is rendered, by means of its strange and abrupt conclusion, almost wholly uninteresting to modern readers.—There formerly lived, at Nantes in Bretagne, a lady of such exquisite beauty that no one could behold her with impunity. All the young men of the town were rivals for her smiles; but four knights, nearly of the same age, and of equal birth and accomplishments, soon eclipsed all the rest of their competitors. Each of these four deserved, and obtained, a place in her affections; but their

merits were so equal that she was unable to make a choice. At tournaments she sent to all four some mark of distinction; a ring, a scarf, a pennant, or other ornament; and all ascribed to her, as mistress of their actions, the exploits which they had the good fortune to perform. It happened once that Nantes was appointed for the celebration of a tournament at the Easter festival. Crowds of knights assembled from France, Normandy, Flanders, Brabant, Boulogne, and Anjou. The four champions, on the eve of the festival, set out to meet the foreign knights, and proposed to just with an equal number: the offer was accepted, and the contest ended to the advantage of the town. On the following day the four young lovers still further distinguished themselves; but the spectacle at length degenerated, as was frequently the case, into a real combat, in which three out of the four were accidentally slain, and the fourth dangerously wounded. All four were brought back to the lady of their affections, who caused the three to be magnificently interred, and summoned the best physicians of the town to assist her in her attendance on the survivor. Their joint efforts were at length successful. He became convalescent, and, finding his passion revive with his returning health, daily importuned the lady for the present of her hand, to which there now remained no other equal claimant. But she gave him to understand, that, feeling herself singular in misfortune, by having lost in one day three admirers of superior merit, she would not consent to bear to the bridal ceremony a heart which must be consumed by eternal regret; and that, as a monument of her grief, she intended to compose a lay, the title of which should be "Les quatre Dols," (The four Griefs). The lover, instead of attempting to argue her out of this resolution, only employs his eloquence in convincing her that the title of the new lay ought to be "Le Chaitivel," (The Wretch), because his rivals had found in death the end of their disappointments, while he was doomed to lead a life of constant wretchedness and privation. The lady having assented to this change of title, the story is suddenly brought to a conclusion.

No. 11. Chevrefoil. 118 lines.

Our poetess informs us that she has often *heard* this lay with infinite delight, but states at the same time that she had

seen it in the *written* history of Tristram and Queen Ysolt. In fact, it is nothing more than a single adventure in their history, and, in its unconnected state, would be scarcely intelligible to the reader, who will see it to much greater advantage in the notes to Sir Walter Scott's highly curious edition of "Sir Tristram."

No. 12. Eliduc. 1184 lines.

This is stated to be a *very old* Breton lay. Its original title, it seems, was "Guildeluec ha Gualadun," from the names of the two heroines of the story; but it was afterwards more commonly styled the lay of Eliduc. It is, by far, the longest tale in the whole collection, and sufficiently interesting to deserve a particular description.

Eliduc was a knight of Bretagne, much admired for his military prowess, his courtesy, and his political sagacity; in consequence of which his sovereign, who loved and admired him, was in the habit of intrusting to his sole management the most important cares of government. Indeed, so great was his influence at court, that he enjoyed, almost as completely as the king himself, the privilege of the chase in the royal forests. But the favour of sovereigns is always precarious; and so adroit were the enemies of Eliduc, that he was suddenly deprived of all his honours, and even banished the country, without being able to obtain from his once indulgent master the privilege of knowing the crimes laid to his charge, or of being confronted with his accusers. Fortunately he was in the prime of life, fond of adventure, and not of a temper to despond. He retired to his castle, convened his friends, and communicated to them the king's injustice, and his own projects; which were, to embark for England, and there to enter into the pay of the first king who might want his assistance. But he had a wife, the fair and amiable Guildeluec, whom he tenderly loved, and whom, as he was unwilling to carry her into exile, he earnestly recommended to their care and attentions. He then selected ten knights as companions of his adventure, and departed for the sea-coast, escorted by nearly all his friends and vassals, and accompanied by his wife, who was almost frantic with grief at this cruel separation, and whom he could scarcely reconcile to her fate by repeating again and again the most solemn assurances

of his eternal and inviolable fidelity. At length he embarked with a fair wind, and, landing at Totness in Devonshire, proceeded towards Exeter. The king of this district had an only daughter, the heiress of his dominions; and, having refused to bestow her on a neighbouring prince, her suitor, was at that time involved in a most distressful war, and besieged in his capital. Eliduc determined to proceed no further: he sent a message to the distressed king, offering his assistance, and requested, if the proposal should be rejected, a safe-conduct through the country. The king most gladly accepted the offer, and ordered his constable to prepare a house for the reception of the welcome guests, and to issue a suitable sum of money, together with a supply of provisions for their monthly expenditure. Eliduc and his attendants were magnificently entertained. His inn was the house of the richest burgess in the town, and *the grand tapestry room** was surrendered to the knight by its proprietor. Eliduc, on his part, was equally liberal. He issued strict orders to his attendants, that, during the first forty days, none of them should accept either pay or provisions from the court; and during this time he kept, at his own expense, a table profusely served for the accommodation of such knights as were unprovided with other means of subsistence. On the third day after his arrival an alarm was spread that the enemy had again over-run the country, and might shortly be expected at the gates. Eliduc flew to arms; and, having assembled his ten knights, was soon after joined by fourteen more from the different parts of the city, who declared themselves ready to encounter, under his command, any inequality of numbers. Eliduc praised their zeal, but observed that this intemperate valour was more fitted for the lists of a tournament than for useful service in the field; and requested that they, who knew the country, would point out some defile in which he could hope to attack the enemy on equal terms. They pointed out a hollow way in the neighbouring forest, by which the invaders usually passed and returned; and Eliduc, while hastening to the place, described to them the measures which he meant to pursue, and exhorted them to follow him with vigour. His measures were so well planned and executed, that the foe

* La bele chambre encurtinée
Li ad li ostes deliverée.

were surprised while laden with booty; and their commander, with thirty of his principal officers, was seized on his palfrey, and made prisoner almost without resistance, by this small body of five-and-twenty knights. The squires and other attendants at the same time secured a large quantity of baggage, and the troop immediately hastened their return towards the city, where, however, their appearance excited no small consternation. The king, having mounted to a watch tower, had descried his small garrison of knights engaged in a distinct action with very superior numbers; after which, seeing a large body in full march for the city, he concluded that Eliduc had betrayed him; caused the gates to be shut, the alarm to be sounded, and commanded the citizens to defend the walls. But being quickly undeceived, he welcomed his deliverer with transports of joy and gratitude; and, after receiving his oath of allegiance for a year, invested him with the supreme military command during that period, and assigned ample pensions to himself and all his attendants. The king's daughter, the beautiful Guilliadun, became anxious in her turn to behold the extraordinary stranger, who on the third day after his arrival had gained a most important victory, and had confirmed her father on his throne, by means of a troop of knights who scarcely appeared competent to the defence of the walls. She invited him to an audience, to which he was formally introduced by one of her chamberlains; seated him near her on a bed; and entered with him into conversation on a variety of indifferent topics. But during the discourse she could not help remarking that this consummate warrior and statesman was a young and handsome knight; and as every fresh survey of his person led her to the discovery of some additional merit, she at length found that her heart was completely engaged to him; and after sighing, and turning pale, and making many reflections on the indelicacy of avowing her passion, would probably have revealed it, if the knight had not, by respectfully taking his leave, put an end to the interview. Eliduc, in the mean time, had not been blind to the perfections of the lovely Guilliadun. Her youth, her beauty, her simplicity and frankness of character, and, above all, those artless sighs which assured him of her affection, had made an indelible impression on his heart. At length the image of his wife, and his

solemn assurances of fidelity to her, interrupted the dream of happiness in which he had involuntarily indulged: but the interruption was now become painful; and while he mentally repeated the promise of adhering to his duty, he felt that the promise was disavowed by his inclination. Guilliadun, after a sleepless night, found it impossible to keep her secret locked up in her own bosom, and, having summoned a trusty chamberlain, confided to him her sudden, and, as she thought, inexplicable passion. After a long discussion, she at length, at the suggestion of her counsellor, dispatched him to the knight with the usual salutations of courtesy, and with a present of her ring and of a rich girdle. Eliduc immediately replied by an equally courteous message; put the ring on his finger; bound the girdle round his loins; offered a rich present to the chamberlain, who declined to accept it; but avoided all discussion on the subject of his message. The impatient princess was almost driven to despair by the report of her chamberlain, who, though convinced that Eliduc could not be insensible to the kindness of his mistress, was unable to satisfy her mind, or even his own, concerning the cause of such extreme discretion. Both, indeed, were ignorant of the conflicts by which the unhappy knight was agitated. To recall his former fondness for his wife, and to conciliate his duty and affection, was no longer possible; to betray and dishonour the amiable Guilliadun would be infamous; and to encourage her passion and his own, without being hurried too far, was extremely difficult: yet on this he ultimately resolved; and, having mounted his horse, set off for the palace under pretence of paying his court to the king, but with the real view of obtaining an interview with his daughter. Fortunately the monarch was at that moment in the apartment of the princess, to whom, while he played a game of chess with a foreign knight, he explained the moves of the game. On the entrance of Eliduc he immediately introduced him to his daughter, enjoining her to entertain and form an acquaintance with a knight who had few equals in merit; and the young lady, gladly obeying the injunction, retired with her lover to the farther end of the apartment. After a long silence, which was equally painful to both, and which each ineffectually attempted more than once to interrupt, Eliduc luckily bethought himself of returning thanks for the ring and girdle, which, as

he assured her, he valued far beyond all his earthly possessions. This warmth of expression encouraging the princess, she frankly proceeded to make an avowal of her passion, declaring that, if he should reject her hand, there was no other man on earth whom she would ever accept as a husband; and when he mysteriously replied that, so far as his wishes were concerned, there could be no bar to their union, but that it was his purpose after the year of service for which he was pledged to her father to return and establish himself in his own country, she told him that she had full confidence in his honour, and was persuaded that when the time arrived he would make all the proper arrangements for her future destiny. Thus ended their interview to their mutual satisfaction. Eliduc, watchful, enterprising, and indefatigable, soon recovered for her father all the provinces which had been torn from him, and insured his future tranquillity by the capture of the king his enemy; but scarcely was the war concluded when the knight received an embassy from his former master, whose ingratitude towards him had been punished by the loss of half the kingdom, and the jeopardy of the rest, adjuring him to come with all speed to the rescue of a country which was now purged of the monsters whose false accusations had occasioned his unjust exile. Such an embassy, a few months sooner, would have been most welcome, but to part with Guilliadun now appeared to him the heaviest of misfortunes. He felt, however, that duty called him away, and he determined to obey the summons. He went to the king; read to him the letters which he had received; and earnestly requested leave to depart, though his stipulated term of service was not expired; observing at the same time, that the state of his majesty's affairs no longer required his attendance, and promising that at the first appearance of difficulty he would return with a powerful body of knights to his assistance. The king, after vainly endeavouring by the most splendid offers to detain him, unwillingly consented to his departure; but to obtain the consent of Guilliadun was far more difficult. Trusting that she possessed the whole heart of her lover, and perfectly unconscious that his hand had been previously given to another, she insisted on accompanying him to his own country, and threatened to destroy herself in case of his refusal Her remonstrances

were accompanied by fainting fits, which terrified Eliduc into a solemn promise of submitting himself to her decision, whatever it might be; but he represented that, having sworn fealty to the king her father, he could not now take her with him without a breach of his oath; whereas, if she would allow him a respite till after the expiration of his term of service, he could then, without disgrace, comply with her wishes; and he promised, on the honour of a knight, that if she would fix a day, he would return and carry her off. With this promise she was satisfied, and after many tears, and a mutual exchange of rings, ultimately permitted him to depart. The return of Eliduc to his country gave infinite pleasure to his friends, to the king his master, and, above all, to his excellent wife, who now hoped that she should be indemnified, by the society of her beloved husband, for her long and dreary hours of widowhood. But she beheld with surprise and consternation that he harboured some secret grief, and anxiously inquired if any thing in her conduct had given him displeasure. Eliduc assured her of the contrary, but told her in apparent confidence that he was bound by his oath to return to the king whom he had lately quitted, so soon as he should have settled the affairs of his own country; that he had much to endure, much to accomplish; and that, harassed as he was on all sides, he should never regain his former gaiety till he should have extricated himself from all his difficulties. In the mean time, his mere name had inspired the enemy with alarm; his reappearance at the head of the armies brought back victory to the royal standard; he saw and seized the moment of making an advantageous peace; and, having done so, prepared for the execution of a more pleasing enterprise. Taking with him only his two nephews, a chamberlain already privy to his amour, and a trusty squire, all of whom he swore to secresy, he embarked for Loegria; stationed his vessel at some distance from the harbour of Totness; and, landing his chamberlain alone and in disguise, sent him with secret instructions to the princess. The confident executed his commission with address; made his way unobserved to the chamber of Guilliadun, informed her of his master's arrival, and explained to her the measures which he had devised for her escape. They waited for the approach of night; when Guilliadun without any other attendant, having d herself in a short and warm mantle, which concealed

the richness of her usual garments, followed the chamberlain out of the town to a small wood, where Eliduc, who had deferred his landing till the evening, waited to receive her. The knight instantly placing her on a horse, springing on another, and taking her rein in his hand, hurried forward to the sea, and embarked without having excited the slightest suspicion of the enterprise, to which none were privy excepting those actually on board. Both wind and tide were favourable; they arrived near the coast of Bretagne, and were on the point of entering the harbour, when a sudden squall from the shore split their mast, rent their sail, and exposed them for some hours to the most imminent danger. All their exertions to guide the vessel being ineffectual, they had recourse to prayers, invoking St. Nicholas and St. Clement, and requesting the intercession of the blessed Virgin with her Son, that they might be permitted to land in safety. The storm still continued; when one of the sailors suddenly exclaimed, "Sir knight, you carry with you the cause of our calamity. In defiance of God, of religion, of justice, and of honour, you are carrying off that lady, having already a beautiful and lawful wife in your own country. Permit us to throw your paramour into the sea, and we shall speedily find our prayers effectual." The princess was then lying, almost exhausted with fatigue, sickness, and fear, in the arms of her lover, who therefore, though bursting with rage, could only express it by execrations, which he vented as loudly as he could in the hope of drowning the hateful voice of the mariner. But the fatal assurance "that Eliduc was already married," had reached the ear and sunk deeply into the heart of Guilliadun. She fainted; and though her lover and his friends employed all the means in their power for her recovery, they were unable to produce any symptom of returning animation. A general exclamation of grief pronounced her dead; when the knight, starting from the body, seized an oar, felled at one blow the presumptuous seaman, threw him by the foot into the sea, took possession of the helm, and directed it so skilfully that the vessel soon after reached the harbour in safety. They all landed, and in a very few hours might reach the castle of Eliduc, which was not far from the coast; but where could he deposit the body of his mistress? how inter it with all the honours suitable to her rank and merit? He at length recollected that in the forest

which surrounded his mansion dwelt an aged hermit, at whose cell the corpse might remain till its interment: he could then enjoy the sad pleasure of visiting daily the object of all his solicitude; and he determined to found on the spot an abbey, in which a number of monks should pray for ever for the soul of the lovely and injured Guilliadun. He then mounted his palfrey, and, carrying the body in his arms, proceeded with his attendants to the hermitage. The door was shut; and they discovered, after having at length procured an entrance, the grave of the holy man, who had expired a few days before. Eliduc caused a bed to be made within the chapel; and placing on it his mistress, whose deadly paleness had not yet injured her beauty, he burst into a flood of tears, kissed her lips and eyes as if in the hopes of restoring their animation, and solemnly pronounced a vow that from the date of her interment he would never more exercise the functions of a knight, but, after having erected an abbey on the spot sanctified by her remains, would himself assume the monastic habit, and daily visit her tomb to express his love, his grief, and his remorse. He then with difficulty tore himself from the body and departed; having first sent a messenger to his castle to announce that he was arrived, but so much fatigued and way-worn as to require nothing but repose and solitude. His wife met him with her usual gentleness of affection; but she instantly saw in his haggard looks that his heart laboured with some misery which her tenderness was unable to remove. His manners were such as to awaken without satisfying her curiosity. He rose at daybreak, spent some hours at prayers, walked alone into the forest, proceeded instinctively to the fatal hermitage, and returned late in the evening, bearing with him, as it appeared, an increased load of misery. He saw with astonishment that death seemed to abstain from ravaging the beauties of Guilliadun; he involuntarily gave way to the most flattering hopes; and after many long sad hours of tears and fruitless prayer retired in anguish and disappointment. On the third day he gave notice that he should go to court and pass the evening with the king. His wife in the meantime, by the promise of the most tempting rewards, had engaged one of her pages to follow his master at a distance during his forest walk, and to report what he should see and hear; and the page having on that morning executed his commission,

she determined to take advantage of Eliduc's absence, to visit the hermitage, and to discover, if possible, the cause of that excessive grief to which he gave way, and of which the death of the old hermit, much as her husband might have loved him, was far from affording a satisfactory explanation. She set forth with the page, entered the chapel, beheld with much surprise a bed handsomely ornamented, and, on lifting up the covering, saw, with still more astonishment, the young and blooming Guilliadun, "*qui resemblot rose nuvele.*" The faultless beauty of a living rival might have excited some indignation in the bosom of the most patient wife: but the eyes of the lovely object before her appeared to be closed for ever; and Guildeluec could find no place in her heart for any sentiments but those of admiration and compassion. After calling her page to survey the spectacle which fully explained and excused her husband's immoderate grief, she sat down by the bed to reflect on the past, and to decide on her own future conduct. During the long absence of Eliduc she had devoted the greater part of her time to religious exercises, and she now clearly saw that to them only could she look for comfort. Having convinced herself of this necessity, she turned with tears in her eyes to the fair object of her husband's regret; when a circumstance apparently trifling involuntarily arrested her attention. A weasel, creeping from under the altar, ran upon the bed, and, passing several times over the face of the entranced Guilliadun, so far incensed the page that with a blow of his stick he laid it dead at his feet, and then threw it on the middle of the floor. The animal had lain there only a few moments, when another weasel coming from the same hole ran up to its slaughtered companion, attempted for a while to sport with it, and then, after exhibiting every appearance of grief, suddenly ran off into the wood, and returned with a flower of a beautiful vermilion colour, which she carefully inserted into the mouth of the dead animal. The effect of the application was so sudden that the weasel instantly got upon its legs, and was preparing to escape; when the lady exclaimed to the page to strike again, and he aimed a second blow, which caused the creature to drop the flower, that Guildeluec instantly seized, and carefully placed between the lips of Guilliadun. The plant had not lost its efficacy. The princess, awakening from her trance, expressed her surprise

at having slept so long, and then gazed with astonishment at the bed on which she lay, at the walls of the chapel by which she was surrounded, and at the two unknown figures of Guildeluec and the page, who kneeling by her side loudly expressed their thanksgivings to the Almighty for what they thought her miraculous resurrection. At length the good lady, having finished her devotions, began to question the fair stranger respecting her birth and preceding adventures, when she related with the utmost candour and exactness, till the fatal moment when the discovery of Eliduc's prior marriage had deprived her of sense and motion. The rest was better known to her hea-ers than to herself; and Guildeluec, more and more charmed with her innocence and frankness, after avowing herself to be her rival, lost no time in comforting her by the assurance that all her hopes and wishes might now be speedily gratified. "Your youthful beauty," said she, "might captivate any heart, and your merit will fix for ever that of Eliduc, who is unalterably attached to you, and whose grief for your loss was such as to preclude all hope of consolation. It is my intention to take the veil, and to abandon all claim to those affections which are estranged to me for ever. In carrying you with me, and restoring you to the now wretched Eliduc, I shall promote, by the only means in my power, that happiness to which I have hitherto been the unintentional obstacle." Guilliadun consented, with silent gratitude, to accept the sacrifice so generously offered by her rival, and was united to her lover as soon as the solemn ceremony had taken place, by which Guildeluec agreed to consecrate the remainder of her days to heaven, in a nunnery which was erected and endowed by her husband, on the site of the ancient hermitage. Their union was followed by many years of happiness, and they closed a life employed in constant acts of charity and benevolence, by following the pious example of Guildeluec, who received Guilliadun into her order, while Eliduc took the cowl in a monastery, to the endowment of which he dedicated the remainder of his worldly possessions. From the adventure of these three, "the olde gentil Britons" (*li auncien Bretun curteis*) formed a lay to transmit it to future ages.

SPECIMENS, &c.

ROMANCES RELATING TO ARTHUR.

ALTHOUGH this class of romances was formerly the most numerous, its metrical remains, excepting such as have been preserved in the form of ballads, are now extremely scanty. This indeed might have been expected; because, when all metre began to be considered as the vehicle of fiction, it was likely that the favourite story of Arthur would be the first to be turned into prose, for the purpose of establishing its authority beyond all dispute. On the other hand, as the art of reading made a slow progress amongst the vulgar, it was natural that parts of the metrical tale should be detached for their use, and, in the shape of songs, be committed to oral tradition. Warton, however, has given us an extract from the St. Graal, a metrical fragment, said to consist of 40,000 lines, composed in the reign of Henry VI. by Thomas Lonelich;[1] and in the same reign Robert de Thornton is supposed to have written the romance of Percyvell of Galles,[2] which is still preserved in the library of Lincoln cathedral. Concerning the former it is difficult to feel much interest, after perusing the deplorably dull extract given by Warton; and of the second I have been unable to procure a transcript.

[1] This person was merely the translator, not the author. The romance referred to is preserved in MS. in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.

[2] A prettily written and amusing romance, printed by the Camden Society, 1844. Thornton was only the transcriber, and the author's name has not been discovered. Few mistakes are more usual than the attribution of early pieces to the copyists.

The tale of Merlin was perhaps at first nothing more than part of the Brut, as composed either by Gaimar or by Wace; in which shape it was certainly, as the French writers generally describe it, the most ancient of all the romances; but the immediate original from which our English translation was made must have undergone many interpolations, because it contains a variety of fabulous matter which had not found its way into the history of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The following abstract was made from a transcript of the MS. No. 150, in the library of Lincoln's Inn; and some deficiencies were afterwards supplied, by the kindness of my friend Sir Walter Scott, from the more ancient and perfect copy in the Auchinlech MS.[3] The romance of Merlin is mentioned among the contents of Bishop Percy's curious folio.

[3] This version was printed by the Abbotsford Club, 4to., 1838, and Sir W. Scott erroneously conjectured it to be the *Gret Gest of Arthure*, mentioned by Wintoun, but it evidently does not agree with the description given by that writer.

MERLIN.

PART I.

THERE was once in Britain a king whose name was Constans.[1] In his youth he had been distinguished by his wisdom and valour, having resisted, and finally driven out of his country, King Hengist of Denmark and his whole army of Saracens. This king had three sons, Constantine, Aurelius Ambrosius, and Uther Pendragon, of whom the elder, preferring the tranquillity of a cloister to the cares of empire, had taken the cowl at Winchester, and was generally known by the name of Le Moine.

Constans being attacked by a mortal disease, and finding his death approaching, summoned his barons, thanked them for their faithful services, and earnestly requested that they would transfer to his son that allegiance which had hitherto insured the independence of their country. They consented; and immediately after the funeral, which took place at Winchester, Constantine was taken from his convent, and vested with the insignia of royalty.

Among those who had appeared to assent with the greatest readiness to the wishes of the dying monarch, was Sir Vortigern his steward; a man of some abilities, who had commanded the British armies with conduct and success; but who had long cherished the most criminal ambition, and now determined to pave his way to the crown, though at the expense of the liberties and happiness of his country. He did not long wait for an opportunity of gratifying his wishes.

Hengist had no sooner learned the death of Constans, and the nomination of his monkish successor, than he sent

[1] Brother of Auldran, king of Britany. See the Chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

After many Saracen[1] stout and stark,
Of Saxoyne, and of Denmark,

and in a short time invaded Britain with an army of an hundred thousand men. The unwarlike Constantine immediately fled to Vortigern, (who is called in the romance, Fortager,) and earnestly conjured him to take the command of the British forces; but the "traitour strong" pretended sickness, and declared that age and infirmities had rendered him incapable of bearing the fatigues of a campaign. The unfortunate Constantine, being thus left to his own resources, issued his orders, hastily assembled an army, led them as hastily against the enemy, and experienced a total and ruinous defeat.

Britain was at that time governed by a number of petty kings, whom the talents of Constans had united in a general confederacy, and who, accustomed to constant success while fighting under his banners, felt with general indignation this unexpected reverse of fortune. All concurred in attributing their defeat to the incapacity of the wretched monk whom they had so hastily invested with the sovereignty; all agreed that, after the death of Constans, Vortigern alone, the companion of his victories, was fitted to lead the British princes in battle: to Vortigern, therefore, they sent an embassy of twelve of their number, inviting him to assist them with his arm and his counsel in repairing their late disgrace.

The crafty steward received the ambassadors with every demonstration of respect, but affected the utmost surprise at the subject of their application:

Tho bespake him Fortager,
"Good knights hardy, and pautener,
I n'am neither your duke ne king!
Why aske ye me counselling?
King Constans I was to swore;
Ever I was you, tho, tofore!
And wered[3] you, with my power,
Wide and side,[4] far and ner!

[1] This word, during the middle ages, was indiscriminately applied to Pagans and Mahometans; in short, to all nations (except the Jews) who did not profess Christianity.

[2] Fierce; bold. [3] Defended.

[4] Far and wide. The word *side* is nearly synonomous with *long;* side sleeves are long sleeves.

With me nis it nought now so:
Wherefore, to your king ye go,
Beseech him he you succour,
And ye will him then honour."
Tho b-spake to him a baroun,
"Sir, our king is but a conjoun![1]
Tho he saw swordes draw,
To flee soon he was well faw.[2]
He can no counsel to no good:
He is so adrad[3] he is nigh wood."[4]—
"I leve[5] it well," quoth Fortagers,
Will I me nothing aventure
To purchase a fool great honour!
Gif Moyne your king dead were,
Ich would you helpen out of care."

This hint was not lost upon the ambassadors. On their return to the confederates they found the unfortunate king at dinner in his hall, and, rushing on him unexpectedly, dispersed his attendants, killed him, and cut off his head.

An act of violence so sudden and unexpected excited very general surprise and indignation; but the assassins, after effecting their purpose, had instantly made their escape. The danger of leaving the throne vacant, while Hengist was at the head of a victorious army, was evident and pressing; the infancy of Uther and Ambrosius precluded their nomination; and there remained no competitor whose military talents could be compared to those of Vortigern. This chief, therefore, was elected without opposition, and graciously accepted the command amidst the shouts of the army. After convening his parliament, his first object was to secure the guardianship of the young princes; but two faithful barons, foreseeing this design, had taken advantage of the confusion attending the murder of the late king, and had conveyed into Britany the intended victims of his ambition.

Vortigern, though much disappointed, was forced to suspend his feelings for the present, and to take such measures as might justify the choice of the nation. He assembled his army, marched against Hengist, checked his career of victory,

[1] A coward. [2] Glad. [3] Frightened. [4] Mad. [5] Believe.

routed him in a general engagement, drove him from post to post, and, finally, enveloped the Saxon forces so completely, that they were glad to purchase their safety by the express stipulation that they should embark for Germany, and bind themselves to abstain from all future attempts on the territory of Britain. Vortigern returned in triumph, and held a solemn festival in honour of his victory.

On this occasion the assassins of the late king, to whom the new sovereign was indebted for his elevation, came forward to claim the reward of their action. But Vortigern, though he had approved the removal of his rival, did not wish to establish a precedent of which he might, in his turn, become the victim; he therefore ordered the immediate punishment of the claimants, whose guilt was fully established by their own confession. They were instantly drawn asunder by horses, and their mangled remains publicly hanged. Unfortunately for him the culprits were men of rank, who had extensive and powerful connections; their execution therefore became the signal of a general insurrection; the royal forces were repeatedly vanquished by the rebels; and Vortigern, after gaining the crown by a course of treachery, was on the point of losing it by an act of justice, when he bethought himself of applying for assistance to Hengist. The arrival of the Saxons, who gladly obeyed the first summons, instantly turned the scale of victory; the confederate Britons fled in every encounter; and Vortigern, restored to all his power, felt the warmest gratitude for his deliverer, which was soon strengthened by another and stronger passion.

Angys had verament,
A daughter both fair and gent;
Ac[1] she was heathen Sarazine:
And Fortiger, for love fine,
Her took to fere[2] and to wife,
And was cursed in all his life!
For he let Christian wed heathen,
And meynt our blood, als flesh and mathen![3]
Many thousand was swithe[4] in wedlock,

[1] But. [2] Companion.
[3] Ellis explains this word *maggots*, but it may be fairly doubted whether that be the correct translation. [4] Quicker.

Als we find written in book.
Ther was nigh all this land
To the devil gove[1] in hand!
Feasts hi[2] made, great and fele,[3]
And hadden all worldes weal,
And held no better law
Than the hound with his felawe!
This lasted well fele year—

But tyrants, though they may repress, can seldom stifle the voice of conscience; and Vortigern was doomed to feel that neither the success of his arms, nor the removal of all his rivals, nor the power of his ally, could give him that security which could only result from a confidence in the affections of his people. Persecuted by continual distrust and anxiety, he determined to construct an impregnable fortress, in which he might defy all attempts of his enemies, and feel secure against the machinations of the malcontents, the possible infidelity of his allies, and the probable invasion of the young princes, Uther and Ambrosius, whose pretensions to the crown might perhaps be supported by a large army from Britany.

Having made these sage reflections, he pitched upon a proper spot, a commanding eminence on Salisbury plain, traced out the plan of the fortifications, and, having assembled fifteen thousand masons and carpenters, ordered them to proceed in the work with all possible dispatch. The order was punctually obeyed. The ground was excavated, the foundation laid, and, before the end of the day, a wall of prodigious thickness, and already breast-high, indicated the formidable extent of the future castle. But when the workmen returned on the next morning to their task, they were not a little surprised to find the ground perfectly levelled, so that the trace of their labour was only visible from the heaps of lime and stone, the remnants of the wall, which lay on each side of the former trench. After rubbing their eyes, to satisfy themselves that they were awake, they exerted all their sagacity in attempting to penetrate the cause of this mystery; but finding that, after all their conjectures, the intended castle retained the same unpromising appearance, they began to remove the

[1] Given. [2] They. [3] Many.

rubbish, dug the foundations anew, placed every stone with the most scrupulous care, and retired to rest, exhausted by fatigue, and at a later hour than usual, but exulting in the conviction that the mischief of the preceding night was perfectly repaired.

Their triumph was of short duration. They returned in the morning, and perceived that the wall was again obliterated. It was now hopeless to inquire whether the evil arose from the obstinate nature of the soil, or from a secret antipathy of the stone and mortar: in either case no coalition could be expected from argument; and experience had now fully proved that any attempt to reconcile them by force was no less desperate. The case therefore was referred to Vortigern, and by him to his astrologers, whom he commanded, on pain of death, to discover why his castle refused to be constructed on Salisbury plain.

The wise men, thus menaced, consulted the firmament, and discovered, by the aspect of the stars, that a boy had been born, five years before, without the intervention of man. They assured the king that, if he could discover this boy, put him to death, and besmear with his blood the foundations of his fortress, it might be erected without any further difficulty. Vortigern, though he saw no reason for doubting the efficacy of the receipt, did not implicitly believe in the existence of such a boy; he therefore dispatched a number of messengers into all parts of England in search of this prodigy, but detained the wise men in prison, assuring them that, if the child were not discovered, their blood should pay the penalty.

In this place our author, being aware that his hearers may grow impatient for the appearance of the great personage whose adventures he has undertaken to relate, leaves the wise men in their prison, and the messengers on their road, and enters upon a mystical dissertation preparatory to the birth of Merlin. He informs us, on the authority of "David the prophet, and of Moses," that the greater part of the angels who rebelled under the command of Lucifer, lost through that act their former power and beauty, and became "fiendes black;" but that some, instead of falling into "Hell-pit," had remained in mid-air, where they still possess the faculty of assuming any shape which may tend to promote their wicked purpose of tempting and perverting mankind. They had

been, as we may easily believe, much disconcerted by the miraculous birth of our Saviour; but they hoped to counteract its salutary purposes by engendering, with some virgin, a semi-dæmon[1] whose preternatural power should be constantly employed in the dissemination of wickedness. Such was their project. We shall now see the means to which they resorted for promoting its success, and the events which led to its final discomfiture.

There was at that time in England a rich man, blessed with an affectionate wife, a dutiful son, and three chaste and beautiful daughters. The happiness of this family was become proverbial among their neighbours; but the fiend having discovered, in the wife, an irritability of temper which had hitherto escaped the notice of her husband and children, he applied himself to encourage this infirmity; and with such success, that the good lady, having been betrayed into a trifling dispute with her son, suddenly burst into transports of rage; imprecated the most horrid curses on his head; and finally consigned him, with all possible solemnity, to the devil. The fiend lost no time in seizing his newly-acquired property, and strangled the young man in his sleep: the mother, stung with remorse, instantly hung herself; and her husband, overpowered by this sudden calamity, died of grief, without confession or absolution.

Among the spectators of this tragedy was a neighbouring hermit, the holy Blaise, who, on considering all the circumstances of the case, plainly discovered that it was owing to the intervention of the fiend. Feeling a fatherly affection for the three orphan sisters, he exhorted them to scrutinize severely all the thoughts and actions of their past life; received their confessions; imposed on each a proper penance; gave them his holy absolution; and then retired to his cell, in the confidence of having secured them against future temptation.

Before we proceed with our story, it will be proper to mention a singular law of this country.

> In all England, tho,[2] was usage,
> Gif any woman did outrage,
> (But gif it were in spousing)

[1] This idea of caco-dæmons inhabiting the mid-air, is evidently taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth's metrical Life of Merlin. [2] Then.

And any man, old or ying,[1]
Might it wite[2] of that country,
All quick[3] heo[4] shoulde dolven[5] be;
But she were light woman told[6]
To all that to her ask would.[7]

On this sanguinary law the devil founded his plan for the destruction of the two elder sisters. He repaired, in a proper disguise, to an old woman, with whose avarice and cunning he was well acquainted; and engaged her, by promises of the most extravagant reward, to attempt the seduction of the eldest sister, whom he was prevented from assailing in person by the precautions of the holy hermit. The old hag readily undertook the commission.

To the eldest sister neo said,
"Alas, my sweet dear maid,
Thou hast fair feet and hond,
Gentil body for to fond,[8]
White swire,[9] and long arm;
Ywis[10] it is much harm
That thy body ne might assay
With some young man for to play,
That thee might find, in every case,
Game and mirth, and great solace!"

To these solicitations the young lady unfortunately neglected to make any objection except the danger of a discovery; which being quickly overruled, she yielded to temptation, was betrayed, condemned, and buried alive. The next sister opposed still less resistance to the artifices of the fiend; but escaped the penalty of the law by readily submitting to indiscriminate prostitution.

[1] Young. [2] Know. [3] Alive. [4] She. [5] Buried.
[6] Proclaimed as a prostitute to all who chose to have commerce with her.
[7] I know of no authority for this strange clause. That among the Britons an unmarried woman convicted of incontinence was doomed to down a precipice, and that by the Saxon law she was liable (as to be buried alive, is asserted in Jocelin's Life of St. Ken-

[8] try; to take. [9] Neck. [10] Certainly.

It is evident that the holy Blaise had been too negligent of his charge; but his whole attention was roused by the arrival of the younger sister, who, falling at his feet, and reminding him of the sad fate of her father, mother and brother, proceeded to relate the public punishment of one sister and the public disgrace of the other. Blaise was filled with compassion; he felt also that his character was staked, and that he was now fairly at issue with the fiend for the soul of this maiden. He therefore took every possible precaution; enjoined her strict observance of his directions with unusual solemnity; displayed the dangers attendant on the seven deadly sins, and particularly warned her against the most formidable of all, the sin of incontinence:—

Bade her heo[1] should nim keep,[2]
That heo ne laid her nought to sleep,
And, namely, nought at night,
But heo hadde candle-light,
And windows and doors, in that stound,
Weren sperd,[3] by roof and ground;
" And make, there again, with good voice
The sign of the holy crois.[4]
Bid[5] him, that he warrant be
Again[6] the fiend, and his pousté."[7]

Armed with these instructions, the maid returned home; watched and prayed with great regularity; and, under the protection of the holy sign, which effectually guarded her doors and windows, escaped for some time the artifices of the tempter. But at length her security betrayed her. The solicitations of some neighbours drew her to the *ale;*[8] her stay was insensibly protracted; the treacherous liquor produced intoxication; and in this state she was assaulted by her wicked sister, who, attended by a troop of loose women, proceeded to insult and even to strike her. The abuse was re-echoed; the blow returned; and a general conflict ensued, from which she at length escaped into her house, which she carefully barred and secured, but in her agitation forgot to

[1] She. [2] Take care. [3] Speared, i. e., fastened.
[4] Cross. Fr. [5] Pray. [6] Against. [7] Power. Fr.
[8] Ale-house. "Go to the ale with a Christian."—Two Gentlemen of Verona.

say her prayers, or to make the sign of the cross: and, throwing herself on her bed, resigned herself to sleep. The fiend, no longer stopped by the formidable barrier which had hitherto excluded him, easily insinuated himself into the room, assumed a human shape, completed his long intended purpose, and retired.

On the following morning his unfortunate victim hastened to her confessor; related, with much contrition, the disgraceful quarrel in which she had been engaged; deplored her neglect of his instructions; and finally communicated to him some reasons for suspecting that this neglect had been productive of consequences which might lead, on their discovery, to her disgrace and punishment. The good hermit listened to her narrative with great attention; deeply lamented her carelessness and the watchful activity of the fiend; gave her his benediction, and dismissed her with the promise that he would employ all the means in his power to preserve her from the fate by which she was threatened.

From this moment her hours were solely occupied by penitence and devotion; but her pregnancy becoming manifest, she was at length seized and carried before the justice. Her protestations of innocence were, of course, disbelieved;[1] a jury of matrons, solemnly convened on the occasion, declared, on their own knowledge, that her asseverations were perfectly incompatible with the symptoms she discovered; and the justice was proceeding to pass sentence, when Blaise interposed and petitioned for a delay of her punishment. He observed that, whatever might be the guilt of the mother, her child was assuredly innocent, and consequently that her death must be deferred till after her delivery; that the story told by the supposed culprit was indeed very wonderful; but that he, to whom it had been solemnly revealed in confession, believed it to be true, that some mystery was concealed under it which time would probably manifest: and therefore he advised that a respite of two years should be allowed,

[1] It may be presumed, however, from a passage in Jocelin's Life of St. Kentegern, that the British virgins were very subject to accidents, though their mental purity was not thereby impaired. The birth of St. Kentegern was, in some respects, very similar to that of Merlin; and so was, according to the editor, that of St. David. Pinkerton's Vitæ Antiquæ, &c., p. 200.

during which the woman should be strictly confined, in the hopes of discovering the truth of her narrative. The justice yielded to this advice, and ordered her to be carefully guarded, with no companion but a midwife, in the upper room of a lofty tower, in which they received a daily supply of provisions by means of a long rope and basket.

In due time the girl was delivered of a son, whose fine features and well-formed limbs excited the admiration of the midwife, though his diabolical origin was evinced by a complete covering of black hair, which she could not touch without shuddering. The pious Blaise, who had exactly calculated the time of the little dæmon's birth was in waiting at the foot of the tower, and, being informed of the event, ordered the infant to be lowered in the basket; bore him away in triumph to the sacred font; baptized him by the name of Merlin; and thus disappointed for ever the hopes of the fiends, at the very moment of their expected completion.

The good man then returned with his infernal proselyte, and restored him by means of the basket to the midwife; who carrying him to the fire, and surveying his rough hide with horror and astonishment, could not refrain from reproaching him for his unreasonable choice of a mother who had never taken the usual means to have a child.

"Alas," she said, "art thou Merlin?
Whether[1] art thou? and of what kin?
Who was thy father, by night or day,
That no man wite[2] ne may?
It is great ruth, thou foul thing,
That for thy love (by Heaven King!)
Thy mother shall be slain with woe!
Alas that stound[3] it shall fall so!
I would thou were far in the sea,
With that[4] thy mother might scape free!"
When that he heard speak so,
He brayded[5] up his eyen two,
And lodly[6] on her gan look,
And his head on her he shook,

[1] Whence. [2] Know. [3] Time. [4] On condition that. [5] Raised suddenly. [6] Hatefully.

And gan to cry with loud din;
"Thou lyest!" he said, "old quean![1]
My mother shall no man quell,[2]
For no thing that man may tell,
While that I may stand or gon!
Maugre[3] them every one,
I shall save her life for this!
That thou shalt hear and see, ywis."

Both the mother and the midwife were very near dying of fright while they listened to these encouraging assurances. They crossed themselves, and, at length resuming courage, conjured him, in the name of God and the Virgin, and of as many saints as they were able to recollect, that he would declare who he was, and what misadventure had brought him thither: but Merlin, who was not naturally loquacious, only smiled at their questions, and abstained from gratifying their curiosity. In this silence he obstinately persevered during six months, when the lamentations of his mother extorted from him a second promise of his protection; by which she was so far satisfied as to await with some degree of confidence the final decision of the justice.

The two years being expired, she appeared in court with her child in her arms; listened in silence to the interrogatories which she had formerly answered, and even abstained from protesting against the sentence which condemned her to be buried alive. But her infant, to the great surprise of all present, undertook her defence, alleging that her pregnancy was the result of a *chance* which neither man nor woman could prevent. Such an argument was certainly not convincing; and the justice, happening to feel offended by the premature eloquence of the young advocate, only replied by confirming the sentence and ordering the culprit to instant execution. But Merlin was not dismayed. He proceeded to tell that he was the son of a devil of great power, though fortunately rescued by an expeditious baptism from the vicious disposition of his paternal relations; that he could prove his præternatural descent by revealing all things past, present, or future; and that the justice was in this respect very much his inferior, as he did not even know the name of his own

[1] Slut; drab. [2] Kill. [3] In spite of.

father. The justice, not much conciliated by this speech, answered,

"Thou liest, thou black conjoun![1]
My father was a good baroun,
And my mother a levedy[2] free:
Yet alive thou may her see."

Merlin calmly desired that the lady might be summoned; and, on her appearance in court, being urged to state his accusation, requested that they might be confronted in private, because such a subject was not fit for public discussion. The justice, a good deal surprised at his discretion, readily consented.

"Merlin," he said, "now pray I thee,
What was the man that begat me?"
"Sir," he said, "by St. Simoun!
It was the parson of this town.
He begat thee, by St. Jame!
Upon this woman that is thy dame."
The levedy said, "Thou foul thing,
Thou hast lowen a stark lesing![3]
His father was a noble baroun,
And holden a man of great renown;
And thou a mis-begotten wretch!
I pray to God the de'el thee fetch!
In wild fire thou shouldest be brent,[4]
For with wrong thou hast me shent!"[5]

Merlin quietly answered, that, as her memory seemed rather defective, he would willingly assist it by relating a few circumstances of her past life. He put her in mind of a certain journey to Carduel, from whence the baron returned rather unexpectedly in the night:—

"It was by night, and not by day,
The parson in thy bed lay;
At thy chamber door thy lord gan knock,
And thou diddest on thy smock,
And were sore afraid that tide![6]
And undiddest a window wide,

[1] Coward. [2] Lady. [3] Lyed a strong lie.
[4] Burnt. [5] Disgraced. [6] Time.

And there the parson thou out let,
And he ran away full sket.[1]
"Dame," he said, "that ilke[2] night
Was begot thy son the knight.
Dame," he said, "lie I ought?"
And heo stood still and said nought.

The justice, to whom this recital, though perfectly new, did not appear at all amusing, impatiently expected from his mother a refutation of the charge; but the lady was satisfied to purchase Merlin's silence by a candid confession. She was therefore dismissed with a severe reprimand; after which Merlin informed the justice that she was gone to the parson, who, becoming desperate at this disclosure of his sins, would immediately fly to the next bridge and drown himself in the river. The completion of this prophecy inspired the justice with great respect for the prophet, whose mother was instantly set at liberty. Five years after this, by the advice of Merlin, she assumed the veil in a convent of black nuns, and spent the remainder of her life in acts of devotion.

Merlin being now seven years old, it is time that we should return to the messengers whom we left upon their travels.

After a long and fruitless journey, three of them chanced to meet in the same town; and this town was the place of Merlin's abode. He happened to be playing, at that moment, with some children in the street; and one of his companions picking a quarrel with him, exclaimed—

"Thou black shrew! thou go us fro!
Thou art a foul thing gotten amiss!
No man wot who thy father is!
But some devil thee begot, I ween,
To don us both treyghe[3] and tene."[4]

At these words the three messengers drew their swords, conceiving that they had found the appointed victim; but Merlin, after rebuking his companion for his indiscretion, ran with a smiling countenance to the messengers, welcomed them to the town, and, to their inexpressible astonishment, related to them the whole circumstances of their mission;

[1] Quickly, hastily. [2] Same. [3] Vexation, A.S. [4] Injury; hurt.

ng them at the same time, that Vortigern's wise men great fools, and that all the blood in his veins would not y way contribute to the solidity of the intended castle. ıessengers, in reply, disclaimed any desire of taking his rovided he could prevent the loss of theirs, by furnish- ıem with solid reasons for disobeying their orders: he ore conducted them to his mother, from whom they d his miraculous birth, and no less miraculous wisdom; t was ultimately agreed that they should all return to on the following day, the messengers on their own , accompanied by Merlin on a little palfrey.

journey lasted three days; and each of these added to lmiration of the messengers for their young companion. passed the first night in a market-town, the streets of were crowded by merchants; and here Merlin, after a ilence, burst into a sudden and violent fit a laughter. ing questioned about the cause of his mirth, he pointed the messengers a young man who was bargaining for a f shoes with uncommon earnestness.

Then said Merlin, "See ye nought
That young man, that hath shoon bought,
And strong leather to do hem clout,[1]
And grease to smear hem all about?
He weeneth to live hem to wear:
But, by my soul I dare well swear,
His wretched life he shall for-let,[2]
Ere he come to his own gate."

e event immediately followed the prediction. On the ring day the mirth of the young prophet was still more ıtly excited by a funeral-procession, preceded by a number rks, and headed by a priest who chanted most loudly melodiously; while an aged mourner, with his eyes fixed e bier, on which was laid a boy of about ten years old, ited every token of despair and anguish. Merlin, being l upon to explain the cause of his merriment, informed ompanions that the mourner and the chanter ought to ge characters; since the boy, whose loss was so feelingly red by the reputed father, had really sprung from the

[1] To mend or patch them. [2] Lose, A.S.

loins of the lively ecclesiastic. The justness of this information was verified on the spot; and the mother of the child, being closely questioned by the messengers, confessed the truth, upon their assurance that the happiness of her good husband, who blindly confided in her chastity, should not be disturbed by a communication of the discovery.

On the third day, about noon, Merlin laughed again, though no visible object on the journey had attracted his attention; and his companions were informed, to their great surprise, that his laughter was occasioned by an event then passing at the court of Vortigern. The chamberlain of that monarch, it seems, was a woman, who for some unknown reason had assumed the dress of a man, and whose beauty had inspired the queen with a passion which she was unable to conquer. But her solicitations being, of course, ineffectual, her love was soon converted into hatred; she flew to the king, and accused the chamberlain of an attempt to offer violence to her chastity; and the indignant monarch, without further inquiry, ordered the supposed culprit to be immediately hanged and quartered. Merlin therefore, addressing his fellow travellers, requested that one of them should instantly hasten to court; recommend an immediate examination into the sex of the pretended ravisher; and, after proving her innocence, inform Vortigern that he was indebted to Merlin for this important discovery.

His orders were punctually obeyed. One of the knights messengers, setting off at full speed, shortly arrived at court; fell on his knees before the king; informed him that the wonderful child was found; that his knowledge was indeed supernatural, and that he would arrive within a few hours: lastly, he told him that the chamberlain lately ordered for execution, as guilty of an intended rape on the queen, was in fact a woman; which might easily be verified by causing her to be examined in his majesty's presence. Vortigern issued the necessary orders, and the truth of the information became manifest; but the king, not much pleased by a discovery which pointed out his own precipitation and injustice, sternly asked the messenger, "from whom he had learned a secret so extraordinary?" He was answered, that it was discovered by Merlin; who, though only seven years old, understood all things, and particularly what related to the refractory castle,

much better than all the wise men in his majesty's dominions.

Vortigern, appeased by this answer, and full of curiosity to see his new guest, ordered out his whole court, and, springing upon his horse, rode forward to meet Merlin, whom he conducted in state to the palace, and entertained with great magnificence. On the following day he conducted the child to the site of his projected castle, and inquired why, the ground being apparently like common earth, and the materials of his edifice sufficiently solid, they were unable to stand upright in the dark, and were constantly tumbled down before morning? Merlin replied, that the accident was in appearance very perverse, but that the cause was not extraordinary.[1] That immediately below the soil were two deep pools of water; below the water two huge stones; and below the stones two enormous serpents, the one white as milk, the other red as fire; that they slept during the day, but regularly quarrelled every night; and, by their efforts to destroy each other, occasioned an earthquake, which was fatal to his intended edifice. Merlin at the same time recommended that he should take measures to verify the truth of this relation.

Accordingly Vortigern employed his fifteen thousand workmen. The water was soon discovered, and, by sinking wells, was wholly drawn out. The two stones were found at the bottom; and, being with some difficulty removed, exhibited the tremendous serpents,

> With long tailis, fele fold,
> And found right as Merlin told.
> That one dragon was red so fire,
> With eyen bright, as basin clear;
> His tail was great and nothing small;
> His body was a rood withal.
> His shaft may no man tell;
> He looked as a fiend of hell.

[1] Ellis had read this portion of the narrative incorrectly, as will appear by the following passage:

> Merlin seyd, Certes, sir king,
> Therof nis no selcouthe thing.

Arthour and Merlin, p. 55.

The white dragon lay him by,
Stern of look, and griesly.
His mouth and throat yawned wide;
The fire brast[1] out on ilka[2] side.
His tail was ragged as a fiend,
And, upon his tail's end,
There was y-shaped a griesly head,
To fight with the dragon red.

Merlin had warned Vortigern and all the spectators that the conflict of these monsters would be very frightful; but curiosity for a time suspended apprehension, till the serpents slowly rising from their den, and expanding their enormous folds, began the combat, when the astonished multitude attempted to fly on all sides; Merlin clapping his hands and shouting to encourage the combatants.

The red dragon, and the white,
Hard together gan they smite,
With mouth, paw, and with tail:
Between hem was full hard batail;
That the earth dinned tho,
And loathly weather wax therto.
So strong fire they casten anon,
That the plains therof shone,
And sparkled about, so bright
As doth the fire from thunder-light.
So they fought, for sooth to say,
All the long summer's day.
They ne stinted never of fighting
Till the even-song gan ring.
So in that time, as I you tell,
The red dragon, that was so fell,
Drove the white far adown,
Into the plains, a great viroun,[3]
Till they came to a valley;
There they rested hem both tway,
Well the mountaunce[4] of a while
That a man might gon a mile.

[1] Burst. [2] Each; every. [3] Circuit.
[4] Amount:—the shorter phrase "mountance of a mile" is often used.

And there the white cover'd[1] his flight,
And wox[2] eager for to fight;
And eagerly, without fail,
The red dragon he gan assail,
And drove the red right again
Till he came into the plain.
And there the white, anon right,
Hent[3] the red with all his might,
And to the ground he him cast,
And, with the fire of his blast,
Altogether brent the red,
That never of him was founden shred;
But dust upon the ground he lay!

The white serpent, immediately after his victory, disappeared, and no man has since discovered the place of his retreat.

Merlin, having thus fully confirmed the truth of his assertion, desired to be confronted with the Magi; and sternly asked them why they had unjustly thirsted after his blood. They humbly replied, that their art had certainly deceived them, but that the signs they had observed in the heavens could admit of no other interpretation; and Merlin, satisfied with their humiliation, explained to them, that the signs and characters which they had seen in the sky were written there by his wicked father, who wished for his destruction. This point being settled, the Magi were pardoned; Merlin became the chief counsellor of Vortigern; and the castle was completed by his directions without any sinister accident.

At length it was suggested to Vortigern that the battle of the serpents, though certainly a sublime and magnificent spectacle, was not likely to have been solely intended for his amusement, but was probably the symbol of some mystery which the wisdom of Merlin would, doubtless, enable him to reveal. He was therefore sent for and questioned by the king, but continued to maintain a sullen silence till the impatient monarch insisted on receiving an answer, and threatened him with instant death as the punishment of his contumacy. The prophet answered the threat with a smile of haughty contempt:

[1] Recovered. [2] Waxed; grew. [3] Seized.

. . . . . Sir, withouten ween,[1]
That day shalt thou never seen,
Though thou take thy sword in hond,
Me to slay, or bring in bond,
Yet may thou fail of all they fare,[2]
As doth the greyhound of the hare.

He then insisted that, before he began to answer, the king should find hostages for his security; nor would he open his lips till two barons of the first distinction and opulence pledged themselves by oath, on the sacred writings, to preserve him from all danger.

Merlin then began to explain the mystery of the two serpents. The red one, he observed, was emblematic of Vortigern, who had obtained the crown by the slaughter of King Moyne; the white, with its two heads, represented the two rightful heirs, Aurelius and Uther, who, confident in their own prowess and in the assistance of Britany, were preparing to attempt by force the recovery of their dominions.

"Into this castle they shall thee drive,
With thy children, and with thy wife,
And all that beth[3] with thee then.
Into the ground men shall you brenne!
And the king Sir Aungys
Shall be slain, and hold no price!
His kindred, and thine also
Shall don England mickle wo!
Sir Fortager, this is the tokening
Of the dragons' fighting.
As I thee say, withouten oath,
Thou shalt it find seker and sooth."[4]
Still him stood Sir Fortager,
And bot his lip with dreary cheer;
And said to Merlin, "Withouten fail
Thou must me tell some counsail,
Withouten chest,[5] withouten strife,
How I may best save my life."
Then Merlin gan stand still;

[1] Doubt. [2] Course. [3] Are.
[4] Certain and true. [5] Debate; strife.

And answered him with wordes grille,[1]
And said, "Sire, withouten ween,
Thus it must needs been;
And therefore, so God give me rest,
I no ken no rede[2]—but do thy best!"
Fortager said, "But thou me tell,
Anon I shall do thee quell!"[3]
He stert up, and would have him raught,[4]
But where he was he ne wist nought.

Merlin indeed had vanished immediately after the conclusion of his speech; and, during the fruitless search of Vortigern and his courtiers, was occupied in relating to Blaise the various adventures which had befallen him since their separation. During his abode with this holy man he compiled his book of prophecies, comprising all the past and future history of his country. Posterity will long regret that this invaluable repertory is so obscure

That few men, withouten ween,
Can understand what it may mean.

Our author now passes to the concluding events of Vortigern's reign, which are thus introduced:

A merry time it is in May,
When springeth the summers day,
And damisels carols leadeth,
On green wood fowls gredeth.[5]
So in that time, as ye may hear,
Two barons[6] came to Fortager, &c.

They brought the very unwelcome intelligence that Aurelius Ambrosius, and his brother Uther, having made good their landing, were advanced within a few miles of Winchester.—Vortigern, without loss of time, dispatched messengers to Hengist, imploring his assistance; while other messengers were sent to Winchester with orders to provide against a surprise, and assurances that he would immediately

[1] Stern; cruel; horrible. [2] Advice. [3] Kill.
[4] Reached. [5] Sing:—in general it expresses any cry.
[6] One baron, according to the version of the romance in the Auchinleck MS.

march at the head of his whole army, and give battle to the invaders. But the tyrant's orders arrived too late. The citizens of Winchester no sooner discovered the banners of their ancient sovereigns, than they resolved to open their gates, and, having overpowered the resistance of the garrison, joyfully took the oath of allegiance to the right heirs of the monarchy.

On the approach of Vortigern and Hengist, the two brothers quitted the city, and drew out their army in order of battle; but, before the conflict began, the troops of Vortigern were already thrown into confusion. Many of the British officers, indignant at being combined with the Saxons against their countrymen, positively refused to make the attack; and, being joined by their troops, boldly resisted the orders of Vortigern, and repelled the attempts of his adherents to overpower them. The news of this revolt being carried to Aurelius and Uther, they instantly seized the favourable moment; threw the allies into confusion; and soon obtained a decisive victory. The fugitives were pursued as far as Salisbury plain, where Vortigern took refuge in his castle; but the Britons having thrown wild-fire over the walls, the whole edifice was soon involved in a general conflagration. The tyrant with his wife and child perished in the flames; and the prophecy of Merlin was thus fully accomplished.

MERLIN.

PART II.

THE following abstract is made from a transcript of the Auchinleck MS. communicated to the editor by Sir W. Scott. The author has evidently intended to relieve the fatigue of his hearers during his long-winded narrative by breaking it into *fyttes* or cantos; and as the expedient appeared at least equally necessary in prose, it has been followed in this abridgment.

CANTO I.

After the death of Vortigern, Uther Pendragon marched to besiege Hengist in a castle to which he had retreated; but the efforts of the assailants being rendered abortive by the strength of the position, he was advised by five of his barons, who had witnessed the preceding feats of Merlin, to apply for the assistance of the magician. Accordingly, messengers were dispatched in search of him; and

> On a day, this messager,
> Sette hem alle to the diner.
> A beggar ther come in,
> With a long berd on his chin;
> A staff in his hond he hadde,
> And shoone on his fete bade.
> With his schuldres he gan rove,[1]
> And bade[2] "good for Godys love."
> They said he scholde nought share
> But strokes and bismare.[3]

[1] Shrug. [2] Prayed. [3] Infamy.

The eld man said anon,
"Ye be nice,[1] everych one,
That sitten here and skorne me,
On the king's nedes that schuld be,
For to finde Merlin child!
The barouns ben witless and wild,
That senten men him to seche,[2]
That nought ne couthe[3] knowleche!
To day he hath yow oft met;
No know ye him never the bet.[4]
Wendeth[5] home by my rede![6]
For him to find ne shal ye spede.
Biddeth him and the barouns five
They come and speken with him blyve;[7]
And seggeth,[8] Merlin wil hem abide
In the forest here byside."

With these words he vanished; and the messengers, as "telleth the letters black," were filled with wonder. Uther, having heard their relation, left the command of the army with his brother Aurilis Brosias (Aurelius Ambrosius), and repaired to the forest, where Merlin amused himself at his expense by assuming three several disguises: first that of a swine-herd; then that of a chapman with a pack at his back; and lastly that of a young and comely peasant,—in which shape he exhorted him to have patience, assuring him that Merlin would keep his assignation, though perhaps not till late at night. At last he arrived, announced himself as Merlin, though still in his peasant's shape, and related that by his advice Aurelius had just attacked and slain Hengist. Uther, rejoiced by this news "as the birds by the first dawn of day," returned with Merlin to the camp, and found his brother not less astonished than delighted by his victory, of which he was unable to give a very intelligible account till he learnt from Uther the name of his powerful counsellor and assistant. At this time a message was received from the Saracens (Saxons) requesting leave to retire, with the assurance that they would never more return to infest the peace of Britain: and this proposal being by Merlin's advice accepted, and the tranquillity of

[1] Foolish. [2] To seek. [3] Knew no knowledge. [4] Better.
[5] Go. [6] Advice. [7] Immediately. [8] Say.

the island restored by the departure of the enemy, Uther was elected sovereign, received the oath of fealty from the principal barons, and was solemnly crowned at Winchester, amidst the rejoicings of the whole nation.

Not long after this ceremony a vast army of Saracens from Denmark made an attack on Bristol. Merlin had forewarned the brothers of this invasion, and at the same time informed them that one of them was destined to fall in the dreadful conflict by which the triumph of the Britons must be purchased, but that the victim would be rewarded by the crown of martyrdom. Uther was directed to make head against the enemy on the land side, while Aurelius should attack them in the rear from the sea beach; and both exerted themselves with the most desperate valour. But Uther received from Merlin, during the engagement, a secret assurance that he was not the person destined to go immediately to heaven; and the romance tells us that he was very glad to hear it. He redoubled his efforts to secure the victory nearly gained by Aurelius, who fell when the enemy was already thrown into confusion; and these efforts were so successful,

> That of thritty thousand, and mo,[1]
> Ne let they five away go.
> Of our were slawen[2] then anon
> Three thousand, and ten, and one.
> Three mile wayes, other two,
> Ne might no man step, ne go,
> Neither on hill ne on den,
> Bot he stepped on dede men.
> The blode over-ran the countray,
> Over alle in the valley.

The body of Aurelius was, on the following day, carefully sought and interred with due solemnity.

Uther reigned seven years, and, scrupulously following in all things the advice of Merlin, distinguished every year by the most brilliant achievements. He overcame King Claudas,[3] the tyrant of Gaul, and became the suzerain of Hoel, king

[1] More, [2] Slain.

[3] This Claudas, the great enemy of Ban and Boort, makes a conspicuous figure in the romance of Sir Launcelot.

of Harman,[1] first husband of the beautiful Igerna, and lord of Gascony, Normandy and Boulogne, Poitou, Champagne, and Anjou. He also acquired the allegiance of Ban, king of Benoit in "lesse Briteyne," and of his brother Bohort of Gannes, two of the first pillars of chivalry. Moreover, he instituted the round table, under Merlin's special guidance, intended to assemble the best knights in the world. High birth, great strength, activity, and skill, fearless valour, and firm fidelity to their suzerain, were indispensably requisite for an admission into this order. They were bound by oath to assist each other at the hazard of their own lives; to attempt singly the most perilous adventurers; to lead, when necessary, a life of monastic solitude; to fly to arms at the first summons; and never to retire from battle till they had defeated the enemy, unless when night intervened and separated the combatants.

This table gan[2] Uther the wight;
Ac it to ende had he no might.
For, theygh alle the kinges under our lord
Hadde y-sitten[3] at that bord,
Knight by knight, ich you telle,
The table might nought fulfille,
Till they were born that should do all
Fulfill the mervaile of the Greal.[4]

Happy are the kings whose ministers happen to be conjurers! Uther had the good fortune to close the list of his sanguinary conquests by the more flattering though not very honourable victory which he obtained, by the assistance of Merlin, over the beautiful Igerna, whom he enjoyed, under

[1] The country of Harman is unknown to modern geography, but appears in this place to mean Britany. The Hoel, king of the country, is perhaps assumed to be the father of him who is celebrated in Geoffrey of Monmouth as the great assistant of Arthur in his victories; for, as our romancer has made him the first husband of Igerna, Arthur's mother, there heroes thus become very nearly related.

[2] Commenced. [3] Sat.

[4] The St. Graal was the vessel in which our Saviour ate the last supper with his apostles, and is fabled to have been preserved by Joseph of

the shape of her husband the duke of Cornwall, in Tintagel castle. It is unnessary to repeat from the romance the same circumstances which are related by Geoffrey of Monmouth; but it will be proper to observe, that the subsequent union of Uther to his fair captive was accompanied by the marriages of the three daughters whom she had borne to Hoel, her first husband.

Nanters, king of Gerlot, married Blasine, the eldest, by whom he had a son named Galaas. King Lot espoused the second, named Belicent, who became the mother of Gawain, Guerehes, Agravain, and Gaheriet. The third was united to Urien, king of Scherham, whose son was the celebrated Ywain.

Merlin, it seems, had exacted from Uther, as the price of his complaisance in furthering his majesty's amours, the absolute right of directing, as he might think fit, the nurture and education of the boy who should result from them; and no sooner were the usual festivities concluded than he repaired to Uther, and reminded him of his promise. He had read in the stars that the wife of Antour, a nobleman high in Uther's esteem, would be the best possible nurse for the child; and therefore directed the king, in the first place, to obtain the consent of the intended foster-father. He then enjoined him to conceal carefully from Igerna the identity of her unknown ravisher with her present husband; and, when she should confess to him her pregnancy, that he should consent to forgive her supposed crime, only on condition that the child should be delivered to a person whom he would appoint, for the purpose of educating it in perfect obscurity. All this was punctually performed. Merlin received the child at the palace-gate; conveyed him to church, where he caused him to be christened by the name of Arthur; and then bore him to Antour's wife, who undertook to suckle him, having obtained another nurse for her own son Kay, of whom she had been recently delivered. As these secret anecdotes may require some attestation, the author assures us that "he has found them *in the black*;" and soon after appeals to the *Brount*,[1] meaning perhaps the *Brut* or Chronicle.

[1] This is no doubt a misreading. The Brut is, of course, the work alluded to.

Arthur grew and prospered under the care of Sir Antour—

He was fair, and well agré,[1]
And was a thild of gret noblay.
He was curteys, faire and gent,
And wight, and hardi, verament.[2]
Curteyslich[3] and fair he spac;[4]
With him was none evil lack.[5]

But he was kept in perfect ignorance of his high birth; and Uther, though he lived many years after this, expired without revealing the secret either to Arthur or to Igerna. Merlin however, who attended him on his death-bed, assured him that his son should succeed him, and that in his reign should be fulfilled all the wonders of the San-Gréal; and with this promise the king was perfectly satisfied. He died, and was buried by Bishop Brice, a personage of great sanctity and no small importance.

As soon as the obsequies of the late king were finished, a parliament was convened for the purpose of electing a successor, and was attended by all the independent lords and princes of the island. But as Uther's family was supposed to be extinct, and numerous candidates brought forward their claims to the throne, the assembly continued to deliberate during six months; at the end of which they were so divided into factions as to preclude all rational hope of accommodation. Bishop Brice, on Christmas eve, took occasion to address them; and represented that, as no human means were likely to produce unanimity in their councils without the special interference of heaven, it would well become them to put up their prayers, at that solemn season, for some token which should manifest the intentions of providence respecting their future sovereign. This advice was adopted; all parties prayed with the greatest fervour,—and with such success, that the service was scarcely ended when a miraculous stone was discovered before the church-door, and in the stone was firmly fixed a sword with the following words engraved on its hilt:

[1] Pleasing; agreeable. [2] Truly. [3] Courteously.
[4] Spoke. [5] Fault.

"Ich am y-hote[1] Escalibore;
Unto a king fair tresore."
(On Inglis is this writing,
"Kerve steel, and yren, and al thing.")

Bishop Brice, after exhorting the assembly to offer up their thanksgivings for this signal miracle, proposed a law, that whoever should be able to draw out that sword from the stone should be immediately acknowledged as sovereign of the Britons; and his proposal was instantly decreed by general acclamation.

King Lot, King Nanters, King Clarien, and all the principal candidates, successively put their strength to the proof; but the miraculous sword resisted all their efforts. It stood till Candlemas; it stood till Easter; it stood till Pentecost, when the best knights in the kingdom usually assembled for the annual tournament; and no one had been able to move it. In the mean time Arthur had been placed, for the purpose of finishing his education, in the service of King Lot: but when Kay was received, previously to the feast of Pentecost, into the order of knighthood, he was advised by his father to take Arthur as his squire; and the young hero accordingly attended his foster-brother, in that capacity, to the lists. Sir Kay was a youth of great valour and address, (though, as the romancer tells us, he "stammered a little,") and, having overthrown a competent number of knights with his spear, proceeded into the medley with his sword,—which unfortunately broke in his hand,—so that he was forced to send Arthur to his mother for a new one. Arthur hastened home, but did not find the lady: he had however observed near the church a sword sticking in a stone, and on his return galloped to the place, drew it out with great ease, and, perfectly unconscious of having performed a mighty feat, delivered it to his master. Kay, who was better aware of its value, swore him to secresy, and then, showing the weapon to his father, professed his intention of claiming the throne.

Sir Antour, who was rather incredulous, insisted that his son should repeat the feat, lest he should only cover himself with ridicule by failing in the experiment before the general assembly; and Kay, who hoped that the charm was now

[1] Called.

broken, readily replaced the sword in the stone; to which the blade instantly adhered so strongly that he was utterly unable to remove it. Somewhat abashed by this discovery of the imposture, he confessed to his father that he had received the sword from his squire; and Antour, carrying Arthur to the cathedral, intrusted him with the secret virtues of the sword, promised his best assistance in placing him on the throne, and only requested of his foster-son, in return for all his service, the promise of nominating Sir Kay to the office of high steward; a request with which Arthur joyfully complied.

Sir Antour now hastened to invest him with the order of knighthood, and equipped him with a degree of splendour suited to his high pretensions.

> First he fond him cloth and cradel,
> Tho he fond him stede and sadel;
> Helm, and briny, and hauberjoun,
> Saumbers, quissers, and aketoun.[1]
> Quarré shield, gode swerd of steel,
> And launce stiff, biteand[2] wel.
> There he gave him, anon-rights,[3]
> To his service forty knights.
> A-morwe[4] they went to tournament,
> And so there dede, verament,
> That, eche day, Sir Arthour
> The los[5] he bare and the honour.

Antour then repaired to Bishop Brice, to inform him that Arthur had performed the conditions pointed out by heaven; upon which the good prelate summoned the general meeting, before whom the trial of the sword was several times repeated; Arthur was unanimously proclaimed, and an early day appointed for his solemn coronation.

During the preparations for this ceremony Merlin arrived, and communicated to the bishop the whole mystery of Arthur's birth. He at the same time forewarned him that the approaching festival would not pass off without a severe contest,

[1] *Cradel*, perhaps from Cratula, a species of dress which Du Cange supposes to have been clerical; *briny*, and *hauberjoun*, different sorts of breastplates; *saumbers*, the coverings for the arm; *quissers*, covering for the thigh; *aketoun*, a coat of mail. [2] Cutting.
[3] Immediately. [4] On the morrow. [5] Praise; glory.

he effusion of much blood; he recommended that Arthur's
should be strengthened as quickly as possible by the
sion of Sir Jordain, Sir Bretel, and all the adherents of
a; and above all, that they should be constantly armed,
repared for the attack of their enemies

CANTO II.

Mirie it is in time of June,
When fenil hangeth abroad in toun;
Violet, and rose flower,
Woneth[1] then in maiden's bower.
The sonne is hot, the day is long.
Foulis maketh miri song.
King Arthour bar coroun
In Cardoile that noble town.

nong the competitors for the crown were six kings, dis-
ished by superior power or merit; these were Lot of
ian; Nanters of Gerlot; Urien of Reged; Carodas king
rangore; Yder king of the Marches; and Anguisant king
otland. Each of these conducted a small army of adhe-
to Arthur's coronation; attended, in sullen silence, the
ious ceremonies; listened without any symptoms of im-
nce to the exhortations of Bishop Brice; and even con-
ended to partake of the venison, of the swans, peacocks,
ards, pheasants, partridges, and cranes, as well as of the
nt and claré,[2] by which the mass was immediately fol-
d. But when, at the conclusion of the feast, Arthur pro-
ed according to custom to confer on his guests the inves-
e of the great fiefs and offices of the crown, they suddenly
with one accord, exclaimed that a misbegotten adventurer
unfit to reign over them, and attempted to seize the king's
on. Merlin, who was present, defended the legitimacy of

[1] Dwell.

Piment was a species of spiced wine, and claré was a wine made of
s, honey, and aromatic spices. Wine mixed with honey and spices,
afterwards strained, was also called claré. In the east of England
sort of red wine is called clarry or claret, and perhaps the term may
relic of our ancient language.

Arthur's birth, and told, as intelligibly as the noise would permit, his whole story; but his eloquence was unavailing—

> The barouns said to Merlin,
> "He was found thurgh witching thine!
> "Traitour," they said, "verament,
> For al thine enchantement,
> No shall never no hore's stren[1]
> Our king, no heved[2] ben,
> Ac he shal sterve[3] right anon!"—

Luckily Arthur's friends, being perfectly armed, very soon drove before them their immense crowd of enemies, and chasing them quite out of the town, shut the gates against them. But though forced to retreat to their tents, they still threatened a speedy vengeance; and their great numbers, their valour, and the smallness of Arthur's party, which did not amount to more than three hundred and ten knights and about three thousand seven hundred ill-armed infantry, seemed to promise them a certain and speedy victory. Bishop Brice, however, having assembled the whole inhabitants of the town, explained to them the divine right of Arthur to the crown, as well as his hereditary claim as son to Uther; assured them of the assistance of heaven; and concluded his harangue by these energetic words:

> "Ac, for he is king, and king's son,
> Y curse alle, and y dom
> His enemies with Christes mouth,
> By East, by West, by North, and South!"

Merlin, on his part, was not less active. He cast, by his enchantments, a sort of magical wild-fire into the spacious camp of the enemy, which spread a general conflagration; and whilst they were bewildered in the smoke and almost deprived of their senses, directed a sally from the town; by which they were instantly put to flight, with the loss of four hundred and fifteen (our author is very exact in his numbers) of their most forward combatants.

But the panic could not last for ever. Nanters, king of Gerlot, at last succeeded in rallying the fugitives, of whom he

[1] Race; progeny. A. S. [2] Head. [3] Die; perish.

ɛted about ten thousand in a valley, and threatened to ı at once the small army of his pursuers.

Arthur seighe[1] where he cam,
A stiff launce anon he nam:[2]
His fete in the stiropes he streight;[3]
The stirop to-bent, the hors aqueight:[4]
The stede he smot, and he forth slode:[5]
Ogain[6] the king Nanters he rode.

rthur, as might be expected, speedily overthrew this gonist, and afterwards King Lot; and drawing the ter- Escalibore, rushed into the thickest part of the press, spread destruction round him. But being stopped by an netrable multitude, and assailed by the six kings at once, ıorse was finally killed, and himself in imminent danger ffocation; when he was rescued by Sir Kay, who by one ıt of his lance overthrew Anguisant and Carodas, and, ted by Ulfin and Bretel, mounted the king on a fresh ɜ. But though all these knights performed prodigies of ır, they did not wholly engross the honour of the day.

Here ye shal understond,
That men o-foot, of this lond,
Helden with King Arthour,
And did him well gret honour.
With axes, staves, and with bowe,
Did so that alle the other flowe,[7]
And this kinges flowen also.

rthur, after a long pursuit, collected his men, bestowed hem the plunder of the enemy's camp, returned to ıale, and after a solemn thanksgiving, and a festival of ɛeen days in honour of his victory, was advised by Merlin ıarch to London, and there to summon round him all the t vassals of the kingdom, for the purpose of receiving · oaths of allegiance.

t this assembly, Merlin, after representing the very for- ıble conspiracy which was formed against Arthur, recom-

[1] Saw. [2] Took. [3] Stretched.
Sbook; trembled. [5] Slid. [6] Against. [7] Fled.

mended that an embassy should be sent to King Ban of Benoit, and King Bohort of Gannes, two of the best knights in the world, to request their immediate presence, and that Sir Bretel and Sir Ulfin should be the bearers of the invitation. They passed the sea; found on the frontiers of France and Britany a vast wilderness, the effect of the long wars carried on by Claudas, the French tyrant, against the Bretons; and during their passage through this desolated country were attacked by seven knights, partisans of King Claudas, of whom they slew six, put the seventh to flight, executed their commission, and returned to England accompanied by Ban and Bohort, and by a third brother named Grimbaut, a clerk, only inferior to the arch-conjurer Merlin.

On their arrival they were welcomed at Portsmouth, and in all the towns from thence to London, by songs and by "hoppings" or dances:

> . . . . . every strete
> Was bi-honged[1], ich say forsoth,
> With many pall, and many cloth.
> Everich man of each mester[2]
> Hem riden again with fair attire.
> In everich strete, damiseles
> Carols[3] ledden, fair and feles.[4]

Arthur met them in great state, and led them to a splendid entertainment; and after dinner the royal guests were much edified by listening to a conversation between Merlin and Grimbaut, which they could not understand, concerning the "quaintise" and contrivance of the sphere, the sun, moon, stars, and other "privy works." They then, being fully satisfied by Merlin as to the validity of Arthur's title, swore fealty to him, and afterwards proceeded to a tournament; which must have been very magnificent, because the author enumerates fourteen knights whose feats of arms were particularly noticed. These were Sir Kay, Sir Lucan the Butler, Sir Grifles, Sir Maruc, Sir Gumas, Sir Placides, Sir Driens, Sir Holias, Sir Graciens, Sir Marlians, Sir Flandrius, Sir Meleard, Sir Drukius, and Sir Breoberius. These festi-

[1] Hung. [2] Trade, A.N. [3] Dances. [4] Numerous.

vities being ended, Merlin at length explained to the two kings the great purposes for which he had requested their presence; the first of which was, that they should assist King Arthur in obtaining the hand of Guenever, the daughter of Leodigan, king of Carmalide, and that with this view they should discomfit King Rion, who, at the head of twenty tributary sovereigns, was making war on the said Leodigan. The other, that they should join Arthur with a body of twenty-five thousand men; whereby he would be enabled to overcome eleven kings and one duke, who were at that moment in rebellion against him, and were actually encamped, with a vast army, in the forest of Rockingham.

Ban and Bohort readily admitted the importance of both these objects, but alleged that they were themselves in hourly danger from the enterprises of their old enemy Claudas, who was then soliciting a powerful alliance against them; and that before they could reach Britany, collect their forces, and return to Rockingham, the eleven kings would probably be masters of London. Merlin, however, was by no means discouraged by these difficulties. He promised them, on the faith of a necromancer, that they should not suffer any damage from Claudas, and that the succours which he requested from them should be ready in due time. He then conducted Sir Ulfin and a strong garrison to Rockingham castle, with instructions to guard every pass, and to prevent the passage of any spies from the enemies' forces; after which, returning to London, and obtaining the rings of Ban and Bohort as symbols of the authority under which he acted, he passed *in one night* to Britany; assembled, with the assistance of Sir Leontes and Sir Farien, the lieutenants of the two kings, an army of forty thousand men; left fifteen thousand for the defence of the country; deposited twenty-five thousand at Rockingham; and, appearing very unexpectedly in the presence of Arthur and his two guests, advised that the royal army should immediately begin its march.

The rebel kings, who had formed their camp in the forest of Rockingham, were ten in number: viz. Clarion king of Northumberland, Brangores king of Strangore, Cradelman of North Wales, and a certain king called Agrugines, whose dominions lay very far north, and who is usually distinguished by the title of "king of the hundred knights;" and

the six who have been already enumerated. Estas or Enslaf, earl of Arundel, had also joined their forces, and this formidable confederacy had assembled an army of forty thousand men. They thought themselves secure of victory, because they knew that Arthur's forces amounted to no more than fifteen thousand; and were ignorant of the large reinforcements which Merlin, by a stroke of necromancy, had so recently smuggled over from Britany. They were therefore on the point of being surprised in their camp; but Lot, having very luckily dreamed a bad dream, sent out a number of scouts, who falling in with Arthur's army on its march, spread the alarm, and gave time to the troops to seize their arms. Merlin, however, by a new enchantment, caused all the tents to fall down at once; and the confusion thus produced forced the enemies to retreat some miles, during which they lost about one-fourth of their numbers. A long and obstinate encounter then took place, in which many fell on both sides by wounds which exhibit great anatomical variety; but at length the confederated kings were totally routed; and Arthur, after bestowing the pillage of their camp on his friends Ban and Bohort, returned with them to London.

Merlin now assured him that he had nothing more to fear from the rebels; that a dreadful famine, which would speedily be felt all over the country, and the approach of new Saxon invaders, would shortly compel his rivals to court his protection; that nothing remained for him but to amass a large stock of provisions, which he must disperse amongst his fortified towns, and to put his whole army in garrisons; that he should presently receive a strong reinforcement of young and valiant knights, who would become the instruments of his future victories; and that he might now dismiss his Breton auxiliaries, reserving only their two leaders, Ban and Bohort. Finally he invited him to a meeting, within a few days, at the town of Breckenho, between England and Carmelide, and suddenly vanished from their sight.

Arthur punctually followed the advice of his counsellor, and, having completed his preparations, repaired with his friends to Breckenho. But Merlin, though now by profession a minister of state, was always by taste a conjuror, and delighted in playing tricks upon the sovereigns whom he protected. He now met Arthur and his company in the

disguise of an old "charle" (peasant) with a bow and arrows, shot in their presence a couple of wild-ducks, and, on Arthur's proposing to cheapen them, took occasion to banter him pretty severely for his avarice. Having at length made himself known, he was received with due honours, and, finding it necessary to detain the court during some weeks at Breckenho, made Arthur amends by procuring for him an interview with the fair Lyanor, daughter of a certain Earl Sweyn, a damsel who had repaired to the king for the purpose of doing homage, and thus incidentally obtained the honour of giving birth to a son who was afterwards a knight of the round table. The name of this "knight of mound" is not mentioned.[1]

Canto III.

In time of winter alange[2] it is!
The foules lesen her bliss!
The leves fallen off the tree;
Rain alangeth[3] the cuntree:
Maidens leseth[4] her hewe;
Ac ever hi lovieth[5] that be trewe!

These moral reflections are occasioned by the author's change of his subject. He now carries us to the eleven kings, who, at the moment of their greatest distress in consequence of their late defeat, received intelligence that a vast body of Saxons was landed in the country, and that their whole remaining force would probably be insufficient to make head against this new and formidable enemy. In this exigency it was proposed by Cradelman, king of North Wales, that they should separate their forces; that each should collect around him a chosen body of men, and retire to the strongest posts in their respective dominions; and that, by carrying on a predatory war against the invaders, they should cut off by degrees their means of subsistence in the interior of the country. This advice was unanimously adopted; and they continued to defend themselves in their several capitals,

[1] In Malory's Morte d'Arthur he is called Borre.
[2] Tedious, irksome.
[3] Renders irksome.
[4] Lose.
[5] They love.

(of which the names and situations are equally unintelligible,) during five years of bloody but obscure warfare; while their subjects, too much harassed to sow or gather in their harvests, were perishing in great numbers through want and misery. Cradelman himself was much infested by a wicked witch his neighbour, sister to a *soudan* called Hardogabran, a pagan conjurer. Her name was Carmile; and she was scarcely inferior, in knowledge of the black art, to the celebrated Morgain, who "beguiled the good clerk Merlin."

So general was the scene of misery, that Britain seemed to be on the verge of its total ruin: but heaven was now preparing the means of its deliverance, and a new generation was rising to repair the mischiefs produced by the rebellion of the confederate kings. Brangore had, about this time, espoused Indranes, the widow of the king of "Hungary and Blaike;" and Sagremore, her son by this foreign husband, a knight of the most undaunted valour, was preparing to come to Britain, to receive the order of knighthood from the hands of King Arthur. The same project was formed about the same time by a small band of young heroes within this island; and the author of the romance has employed the remainder of this, and the whole of the following canto, in relating their achievements.

The reader will remember that Nanters, king of Gerlot, had married Blasine, uterine sister to Arthur, and had by her a son named Galachin. King Lot had married Belisent, the other daughter of Ygerna, and had four sons, Wawain or Gawain, Gueheret, Gaheriet, and Agravain. Galachin, having observed that the progress of the enemy was chiefly owing to want of union among the Britons, one day inquired of his mother Blasine whether Arthur was indeed his uncle; and on being told by her that it was so, and that he could not be better employed than in producing a reconciliation between his uncle and his father, he determined to undertake the task, and to associate, if possible, his cousin Gawain in the same project. Gawain was on a hunting party when Galachin's messenger arrived; and, returning to his mother with his three greyhounds in one hand and three *raches*[1] in the other, was received with reproaches for the futility of his amusements.

[1] Scenting hounds.

"Thou lesest[1] thy time with unright;
Thou hast age to ben knight.
Thou shult leten[2] thy folie,
Thy rage[3] and thy ribaudie.[4]
Think on thine eme[5] King Arthour,
Knight that is of mest[6] valour.
And fond[7] to make good acord
Between him and Lot thy lord!"
Ther sche told, him before,
How Arthour was bigeten and bore, &c.

Gawain excused himself by alleging his ignorance of these particulars. He redispatched the messenger of Galachin with assurances that he would shortly join him; and, finding that his three brothers were resolved on the same adventure, desired Belisent to furnish them with arms and a proper number of attendants; repaired at their head to "the fair of Buckland," the appointed place of meeting; and, embracing Galachin, joyfully associated him in the enterprise, and fixed a day for their march towards London.

Canto IV.

Miri is th' entré of May;
The fowles make mirie play;
Maidens singeth, and maketh play;
The time is hot, and long the day.
The jolif[8] nightingale singeth,
In the grene medè flowers springeth.

Lot and Belisent equipped their four sons for their great expedition with the utmost magnificence; and assembled to attend them five hundred young men, sons of earls and barons, all mounted on the best horses, with complete suits of choice armour, and all habited in the same cloth. Of this splendid troop, nine only had yet received the order of knighthood: the rest were candidates for that honour, and anxious to earn it by an early encounter with the enemy.

[1] Loosest. [2] *Leten*, leave. [3] *Rage*, wantonness.
[4] *Ribaudie*, profligacy. [5] Uncle. *Mest*, most.
[7] Try. [8] Joyful.

The four princes received the parental benediction, and departed for the place of rendezvous appointed by Galachin, who met them with a similar troop of two hundred men appointed by Nanters and Blasine to attend him.

After a march of three days, they arrived in the vicinity of London, where they expected to find Arthur and his court, and very unexpectedly fell in with a large convoy belonging to the enemy, consisting of seven hundred sumpter horses, seven hundred carts, and five hundred waggons, all loaded with provisions, and escorted by three thousand men.

> For the poudre[1] of this charging,
> No might man see sonne shining.

Indeed the dust was considerably increased by the number of fugitives from the whole neighbouring country, who, with shrieks which "shrilled into the clouds," attempted to escape from their burning houses, and from the indiscriminate slaughter exercised by the spoilers. Gawain's small army afforded a retreat to these frightened peasants, and a rallying point to about five hundred soldiers who were also flying before the enemy; and from these he learnt the absence of Arthur, who was then conducted by Merlin to the assistance of Leodegan; the general desolation of the country; and the necessity of a speedy effort to retrieve the affairs of the Britons. A single charge from Gawain's impetuous cavalry was sufficient to recover the convoy, which was instantly dispatched to London; and the escort, though much more numerous than the assailants, being thrown into confusion by this very unexpected attack, were so rapidly cut to pieces, that no more than twenty men were able to escape, and to carry to the neighbouring army of Saracens the news of this astonishing disaster. Their panic indeed was excusable, as they had never encountered any enemies at all comparable to these youthful heroes, and particularly to the formidable Gawain:

> For arme none, y-wrought with hond,
> Ogain his dent[2] no mighte stond.
> That he tok, he all to-rof,[3]
> So dust in wind; and aboute drof![4]

[1] Dust. [2] Stroke. [3] Crumbled to pieces. [4] Drove; rushed.

thor here takes occasion to inform us of a circum-
ry notorious at the time of these events, and cer-
less curious than important, viz., that the strength
n, though always surpassing that of common men,
ct to considerable oscillations, depending on the
of the sun. From nine in the morning till noon his
powers were doubled; from thence till three o'clock
ernoon they relapsed into their ordinary state; from
the time of even-song they were again doubled;
ich this preternatural accession of strength again
till day-break. The poet, therefore, had reason to
ith some exultation that this great victory was
about noon, or shortly after.

mean time, one half of the twenty paynims who had
fell in with a body of seven thousand unbelieving
, and brought them back to the attack of the five
nd of their little army. Gawain, singling out a king
ıoas, who was fourteen feet high, began the battle by
him from the crown of the head to the breast. Ga-
ıcountered King Sanigran, who was also very huge,
)ff his head. Agravain, having no kings immediately
is reach, amused himself with the necks of plebeians,
e cut through by dozens at a time, till he formed a
dead bodies to his satisfaction. Gaheriet was em-
n the same manner, when he was called off from this
rey by the desire of killing a certain King Grinbat,
saw in the act of overthrowing his brother Gueheret.

who had witnessed Gaheriet's prowess, wished to
he contest, and galloped off the field at full speed till
ıed a valley, where a fresh army of eight thousand
, conducted by the other ten fugitives, was advancing
the battle. Here he expected to find refuge; but
, pursuing him into the crowd, discharged a blow at
ich cut off a quarter of his helmet, one of his cheeks,
er, and an arm. The young prince now attempted,
urn, to retreat; but though he easily cut his way
the enemy, he was closely pursued by numbers, till
ı, his horse being killed under him, he was compelled
singly and on foot against a host of enemies.

nately, one of his attendants, who had witnessed his
ıs pursuit of Grinbat, foresaw the danger, and has-

tened to Gawain with the intelligence. That prince, his two brothers, and Galachin instantly flew to the rescue of Gaheriet, bore down or killed all before them, and at length found the hero on the ground, nearly exhausted by heat and fatigue, and surrounded by a crowd of vulgar enemies, who had already begun to unlace his helmet, and were preparing to cut off his head; when they were diverted from their purpose by the sudden amputation of their own. Gaheriet being now supplied with a fresh horse, the five knights made a desperate charge, cut their way out, and, though harassed in their retreat, rejoined their little army.

In the mean time, the convoy, which they had intercepted and sent to London, having reached that city in safety, the *constable* or mayor, whose name was Sir Do, learnt the very unequal conflict in which the young princes had been engaged; and having proceeded to Algate, where he blew his horn, and thus collected the several aldermen of the city with their respective wards, amounting to seven thousand men, ordered them to arm, and, leaving two thousand to guard the city, put himself at the head of five thousand and marched out to the rescue of Gawain. It was now past three o'clock; and Gawain's strength becoming doubled, he astonished friends and foes by his supernatural prowess.

> In blood he stode, ich it abowe,
> Of horse and man into the anclowe,[2]
> That he hadde himselve y-slawe,
> Withouten sleight of his felawe.[3]

In this situation he saw a pagan on the point of killing his brother Agrazain, and suddenly leaping two-and-twenty feet over the heads of his own assailants, clove the misbelieving wretch to the girdle, and, springing into the empty saddle, again dashed into the midst of his enemies.

The arrival of the Londoners soon decided the contest. Gimbating, one of the Saracen kings, was already slain; Medelan, his associate in the command, after felling Sir Do, was killed by Gawain; and the troops, now without a leader, fled in all directions, and were slaughtered without resistance.

[2] I maintain it, *avow* it to be true. [2] The uncle, A.S.
[3] Without the help or contrivance of his companions.

The princes, having thus in one day annihilated three armies of the enemy, proceeded to London, where Gawain directed Sir Do to divide the whole booty amongst the citizens, and thus added considerably to the acclamations with which they had already welcomed their noble deliverers.

Canto V.

Marche is hot, miri, and long;
Fowles singen her song;
Burjouns springeth, medes greeneth;
Of every thing the heart keeneth.[1]

Arthur departed from Breckenho and arrived at Carohaise, the capital of Carmelide, attended only by Merlin, and by thirty-nine knights whom the magician had selected for that service. Leodegan was at that moment sitting in council with his knights of the round table, two hundred and fifty in number, who had all been nominated by Uther Pendragon, and placed under the command of *Hervi the Rivel* and *Millot the Brown*, two knights of approved valour and experience: and they were then endeavouring, but with little prospect of success, to devise means of resisting the impending attack from Ryance, king of Ireland, who, with fifteen tributary kings and an almost innumerable army, had nearly surrounded the city, and was preparing to assault the walls.

Merlin halted his company at the door of the council-hall, caused them to alight, and marched them in procession up to the throne, where Ban was directed to address the king in a speech which he had previously learned at Breckenho. And here the author thinks that it will be very comfortable to his hearers to know the names of the illustrious characters who formed this procession; they are as follow:

Arthur was supported on his right by King Ban, and on his left by King Bohort; the rest followed hand in hand, but in pairs. These were, Sir Antour, Sir Ulfin, Sir Bretel, Sir Kay, Sir Lucan, Sir Do, son of the mayor of London, Sir Grifles, Sir Maroc, Sir Drians of the forest sauvage, Sir Belias of

[1] Becomes earnestly inclined for.

Maiden Castle, Sir Flandrin, Sir Lammas, Sir Amours the Brown, Sir Ancales the Red, Sir Bleobel, Sir Bleoberis, Sir Canode, Sir Aladan the Crisp, Sir Colatides, Sir Lampades, Sir Lercas, Sir Christopher of the Roche North, Sir Aigilin, Sir Calogrevand, Sir Angusale, Sir Agravel, Sir Cleodes the Foundling, Sir Ginures of Lambale, Sir Kehedin, Sir Merengis, Sir Gorvain, Sir Craddock, Sir Claries, Sir Bhehartis, Sir Amadan the Orgulous,[1] Sir Oroman hardy of heart, Sir Galescound, and Sir Bleheris, a godson of King Bohort. Merlin, who bore the white rod before Arthur, completed the number.

Those who may be disposed to glance their eye slightingly over this edifying catalogue should be told, that the names thus divulged to them were carefully concealed from King Leodegan; and that Ban was only permitted to tell him, in answer to his many inquiries respecting this noble troop, that "they were strangers who came to offer him their services in his wars, but under the express condition that they should be at liberty to conceal their names and quality, until they should think proper to give him further information." These terms were thought very strange and unprecedented, but were thankfully accepted; and the strangers, after taking the usual oath to the king, retired to the lodging which Merlin had prepared for them.

A few days after this, the enemy, regardless of a truce into which they had entered with Leodegan, suddenly issued from their camp to the number of sixty thousand men; made an unexpected attempt to surprise the city; and, being disappointed, spread themselves over the country, and, after carrying off as much booty as they could collect, proceeded to put all the inhabitants to the sword. On this alarm Cleodalis, the king's steward, assembled the royal forces with all possible dispatch; these amounted to about five thousand men. The two hundred and fifty knights of the round table soon joined him, and waited for the king's orders. Arthur and his companions also flew to arms; and Merlin appeared at their head, bearing a standard which excited, and not without reason, universal astonishment.

Upon the top stode a dragoun,
Swithe griselich,[2] with a litel croun;

[1] The proud, A. N.

[2] *Griselich*, frightful.

Fast him beheld alle in the town!
For the mouthe he hadde grinninge,
And the tonge out-platting,[1]
That out kest sparkes of fer,[2]
Into the skies thot flowen cler.
This dragoun hadde a longe taile,
That was wither-hooked,[3] sans faile.
Merlin cam to the gate,
And bade the porter him out late.

e porter, of course, refused, and requested him to await ing's orders; but Merlin, taking up the gate with all its rtenances of locks, bolts, iron bars, &c., directed his to pass through; after which he, without dismounting, ced it in perfect order, set spurs to his horse, and dashed at ead of his little troop into a body of two thousand Saracens were leading to their camp a convoy of provisions. To mfit these miscreants, and to retake the convoy, was the of about twenty minutes; but on their return towards ity, they met a second convoy of a thousand carts escorted xteen thousand men. The disparity of numbers being so nous, Merlin thought it worth while to cast a spell among nemy, whom his troop charged with their usual gallantry, proceeded to cut in pieces with all possible expedition. he people in the city, who beheld this strangely unequal st, were ashamed of leaving the small body of strangers ir fate.

Tho were up-undone the gate;
Cleodalis rode out thereat.
The steward, with five thousinde,
Opon the paynims[4] gun to wende.[5]
There was din! there was cry!
Many shaft broken, sikerly.[6]
For, in the coming of Cleodalis,
The payens might sen,[7] y-wis.
There was swiche contek[8] and wonder,
That it dinned so the thunder.

platting, lolling out. [2] *Fer*, fire. [3] *Wither-hooked*, barbed.
Heathens. [5] Began to go. [6] Surely; certainly.
t see; *i.e.*, they recovered their sight. [8] Debate. Hence, contest.

Leodegan, at the same time, charged at the head of two thousand picked men, and of fifty knights of his round table, and the remaining two hundred knights formed a third separate division of his small army. But the Saracens, having at length united all their forces, were enabled to oppose to each of these divisions a prodigious superiority. The knights of the round table, unable to bear up against the multitude of their opponents, made a desperate stand under the city walls; and while Cleodalis, with the assistance of Arthur and his companions, was gaining some slight advantages, the division commanded by the king in person was completely surrounded, and the monarch himself borne down and carried off by the enemy. Five hundred picked knights were chosen to conduct him to the camp of Ryance, whilst his attendants, though fighting with desperation, were unable to effect his rescue.

His dochter[1] stode on the city wall,
And beheld this misaventure[2] all.
Her hondes she set on her hair,
And her fair tresses all to-tare.[3]
She her to-tare to her smok,
And on the wal her heved[4] gan knok,
And swooned oft, and said, "Allas!"

But Merlin, aware of what passed in every part of the field, suddenly collected his knights, led them out of the battle, intercepted the passage of the five hundred who had conveyed away Leodegan, and, charging them with irresistible impetuosity, soon cut in pieces or dispersed the whole escort. The strokes of Arthur, Ban, Bohort, and the rest, fell "like hail on the shingles;" and Merlin, having now near five hundred vacant horses, and as many suits of excellent armour, at his disposal, hastily equipped the king, and, leaving Cleodalis to fight as well as he could, returned at full speed to the city walls, and fell "like a northern tempest" on the rear of the victorious Saxons.

The knights of the round table were, by this time, almost all unhorsed; but the very welcome sight of Merlin's fiery dragon, and the joyful shouts from the walls which hailed

[1] Daughter. [2] Misfortune. [3] Tore in pieces. [4] Head.

the unexpected return of their captive monarch, inspired them with fresh courage, and spread alarm through the ranks of the Saracens. The terrible "*forty-two*" overcame, like a torrent, all opposition; and the boldest leaders of the Paynims, in attempting to check its progress, successively met their destruction. Caulang, a giant fifteen feet high, encountered Arthur: and the fair Guenever, who already began to feel a strong attachment to the handsome stranger, trembled for the issue of the contest; when the British monarch, dealing a dreadful blow on the shoulder of the monster, divided him to the navel so accurately, that the two sides hung over his horse, and he was thus carried about the field to the great horror of the Saracens. Guenever could not refrain from expressing aloud her wish, that the gentle bachelor who carved giants so dexterously were destined to become her husband; and the wish was re-echoed by her attendants. King Ban dispatched a second giant in a nearly similar manner; and Bohort meeting a third, who was standard-bearer to the army, cut away his shoulder, arm, and banner; after which the enemy began to fly with precipitation, and were closely pursued by Leodegan and his attendants.

But the Saracens had still in the field two large armies; one commanded by a king called Saphiran, who was opposed to Cleodalis, consisting of about fourteen thousand men; and a second, led by a certain King Sornegrex, amounting to eight thousand, including the fugitives who had rallied round him. Merlin led his forty-two against the latter, and was shortly joined by the two hundred and fifty knights o the round table, who had now supplied themselves with fresh horses; but as the heathens made a stout resistance, he directed his followers to turn their whole efforts against ten giant-champions on whom the Saracens placed their principal reliance. These, with Sornegrex at their head, being soon dispatched, the Christian knights quickly spread destruction through the rest, and drove them like straw before the wind. Yet even this victory was inefficient, because the beaten army took refuge with that of Saphiran, who by dint of numbers had already driven Cleodalis under the walls of the city, and began to anticipate the total destruction of the Christian forces.

Merlin, though aware that no time was to be lost, ordered his knights to alight for a few moments, to relieve their

horses, and then led them to this fresh contest. Cleodalis, who had exhausted all the arts of a commander, was almost in despair, when he was cheered by a general shout from the walls, announcing the rapid approach of the fire-casting dragon, of Leodegan, and of the knights of the round table. The first charge of the forty-two was, as usual, irresistible; but Saphiran, who far surpassed all the Saracen kings in skill and valour, summoning round him his best knights, made a desperate attack upon these new assailants, and had the honour of breaking into this hitherto untouched phalanx, and of unhorsing many of Arthur's bravest champions. He then again returned, broke into them a second time, bore Leodegan to the ground, slew his horse, and was only prevented from killing him by the timely interposition of Arthur, who vented his rage in imprecations of vengeance against the infidel; while Merlin, boiling with impatience, exclaimed,

"What abidest thou? coward king!
The paien[1] give anon meeting!"

Arthur, stung with this unexpected reproach, flew to meet Saphiran, whose spear was so strong and well directed that it pierced his shield and hauberk, and wounded him in the side; but his lance at the same time passed through the body of Saphiran.

Quath Arthur, "Thou hethen cokein,[2]
Wende to the devil Apolin!"
The payen fel dede to ground;
His soul laudht[3] hell-hound!

Ban, who on this occasion had first trembled for the days of his friend; Bohort, Kay, and the other worthies, now exerted themselves so well that the remaining leaders of the Saracens were soon dispatched; and the victory was so complete, that only five hundred survivors of this terrible day were able to reach the camp of Ryance.

The immense booty gained from the heathens was, by the king's order, presented to Arthur, who divided the whole amongst the subjects of Leodegan, having first particularly

[1] heathen. [2] Rascal. [3] Caught.

enriched the host with whom he had hitherto lodged, and whose house he now left for apartments at the palace. He was disarmed, and conducted to the bath by the princess Guenever, while his friends were attended by the other ladies of the court. Amongst these was a second Guenever, an illegitimate daughter of Leodegan, and so nearly resembling the princess that it was difficult to distinguish them. Her mother, a lady of exquisite beauty and maid of honour to the queen, had been married to Cleodalis, but, during his absence on some embassy, had resumed her functions, and habitually slept in the royal apartment. The queen, a woman of exemplary devotion, constantly rose to attend matins; and the amorous monarch had contrived on these occasions to indemnify himself for her absence, and to share the bed of her attendant; whom, after the birth of a little Guenever, he secreted from her husband, and whom he continued to reserve as an occasional substitute for his devout consort, without exciting, as it should seem, any violent indignation in the tranquil Cleodalis.

The knights were now conducted to a magnificent entertainment, at which they were diligently served by the same fair attendants. Leodegan, more and more anxious to know the name and quality of his generous deliverers, and occasionally forming a secret wish that the chief of his guests might be captivated by the charms of his daughter, appeared silent and pensive, and was scarcely roused from his reverie by the banters of his courtiers. Arthur, having had sufficient opportunities of explaining to Guenever, with that obscurity and circumlocution which a growing passion always inspires, his great esteem for her merit, was in the joy of his heart, and was still more delighted on learning from Merlin the late exploits of Sir Gawain in Britain; by means of which his immediate return to his dominions was rendered unnecessary, and he was left at liberty to follow those propensities which led him to protract his stay at the court of Leodegan.

Canto VI.

Listeneth now, fele and few;
In May the sunne felleth dew;
The day is miri, and draweth along;
The lark arereth[1] her song;
To meed[2] goth the damisele,
And faire flowers gadreth fele.

The poet now proceeds to describe the miseries to which the confederate kings in opposition to Arthur were exposed by the Saracen or Saxon invasion; but, unluckily, his geography is so very confused, that it is impossible to understand the position of the various battles which he paints with great minuteness.

Cradelman, king of North Wales, was first alarmed for the safety of his dominions, by the information that the enemy had landed in great force on both sides of Arundel, a city which, according to this romance, was not in Sussex but in Cornwall. Cradelman, taking with him ten thousand men, one-half of which he confided to the command of his steward Polydamas, attacked the pagans during the night, completely surprised them, and made a great slaughter; but the fugitives, having escaped to the neighbouring territories of Carmile, brought back a most powerful reinforcement, by which Cradelman was in his turn very nearly overpowered; but was finally rescued from destruction by a well directed sally of the garrison of Arundel, and by the assistance of the king of the hundred knights, who had accidentally heard the news of the invasion. The spoils of the enemy's camp were carried in triumph into Arundel.

About the same time,

Ther comen up, fer on north,
Ten riche soudans of grete worth;

and these soudans, or sultans, whose names are carefully enumerated, directed their forces, amounting to a million and a half of men, against Anguisant, king of Scotland. Anguisant was then in his city of Comanges, and, hearing that the

[1] Raises. [2] Mead, or meadow.

whole plain country was occupied by the infidels, hastily levied a body of fifteen thousand men, and riding to an eminence, beheld the extensive desolation of his territories.

His men there he shift a-two,[1]
Half he toke himself, and mo,
And halvendel[2] he tok[3] Gaudin,
That was knight hardi and fin,[4]
That sithen,[5] of his mighty hand,
Wan that maiden of the douke Brauland.

This little army performed prodigies of valour, but were finally overpowered by the enormous superiority of numbers. Leaving nine thousand of his followers on the field, Anguisant with great difficulty led back the remaining six to his fortified city; nor could he have effected this retreat but for the timely assistance of Urien, who, accompanied by his nephew Baldemagus, fell upon the rear of the Saracens with a body of twelve thousand picked soldiers.

Ther was mani heved off weved,[6]
And many to the middle cleved;[7]
And mani of his horse y-lust;[8]
For sothe, there ros so michel dust,
That of the sunne, schene and bright,
No man might have no sight.
Here and there cri, and honteye![9]
Men might hem heren thre mile way!

The approach of night separated the combatants. Urien, on his return, unexpectedly fell upon a valuable convoy of the enemy, escorted by about eight thousand men, who were then unarmed and at table. He charged them, cut the escort to pieces without opposition, and carried off the convoy.

While this was passing in the north, Sagremor, who had embarked at Constantinople for the purpose of receiving the order of knighthood from King Arthur, arrived in Sussex with seven hundred noble companions who were ambitious of the same honour. They found the whole country overrun by a

[1] Divided into two portions. [2] Half. [3] Gave.
[4] Perfect. [5] Since. [6] Heads taken off.
[7] Cut through. [8] Lost. [9] Confusion; dishonour.

Saracen army under the command of King Oriens; but, having collected about five hundred adventurers whom they blended with their little troop, determined, with more boldness than wisdom, to cut their way through these infidels. They had scarcely formed this resolution, when an *old churl*, accosting Gawain, who was still in London, informed him that Sagremor was on the point of being surrounded and killed; urged him to hasten, with such forces as he could raise, to his assistance; and promised to conduct him by a very short route to the place of combat. To confirm his intelligence, he presented some letters apparently written by Sagremor; and Gawain was almost immediately ready to depart at the head of fifteen thousand citizens, who were joined on the march by numbers of volunteers, whilst the old churl conducted them without the least interruption, through roads unknown to the enemy, till they reached the field of battle.

Sagremor and his companions had successfully cut their way through some twenty thousands of miscreants, but at last found themselves, by repeated exertions of almost miraculous valour, hemmed in on all sides by the innumerable host of their assailants. They were then reduced to despair, and almost on the point of throwing down their arms, when their spirits were restored by the unexpected appearance of Gawain and his brethren, who joined them at the first charge, after killing or oversetting sixteen thousand infidels. Then

> Mani mouthe the gras bot,[1]
> And griselich yened,[2] God it wot!
> Payens floated in her blod!
> Ever is Christis mighte good.

Gawain, having luckily encountered King Oriens, gave him a blow on his helmet which threw him to the ground in a swoon, and was preparing to pursue his victory; when an unknown knight, suddenly accosting him in an imperious tone, ordered him to sound a retreat, and to lead his army to Camalot. Gawain obeyed, and had conducted his troops about a mile; when Oriens, recovering from his trance, called for a fresh horse and a new suit of armour, and galloped at the head of sixty thousand cavaliers to intercept the Chris-

[1] Bit the grass, i.e. died. [2] Yawned frightfully.

tians. The result however was, that he was thrown into a second swoon by a blow from the sword of Gawain; and though the hardness of his skull and helmet resisted this repetition of the experiment, a considerable number of his best generals were slain around him by Gaheriet, Agravain, Galachin, Gueheres and Sagremor; and the Christians made good their retreat within the walls of Camalot, where the arrival of Sagremor was celebrated by all kinds of rejoicing.

Oriens, whose bruises did not tend to soften the ferocity of his temper, finding that it was hopeless to attempt the siege of Camalot, led his army into the territory of Caubernic, belonging to Estas, duke of Arundel, spoiled the whole country, and carried his ravages into the *adjoining* states belonging to King Clarion. Estas repaired to this monarch for the purpose of consulting him on the means of resisting, or at least of harassing, their inexorable enemy; and after a long discussion, which it is not worth while to repeat, they agreed to take post, with as many troops as they could levy, in the great forest of Rockingham, and there to watch an opportunity of taking their revenge on the Saracens.

Canto VII.

In May is miri time swithe;
Foules in wode hem maken blithe;
In every lond arist[1] song;
Jesus Christ be ous among!

The business of this short canto is not very interesting. The combined troops of Duke Estas and of King Clarion, having chosen a station in the forest where seven roads met, soon discovered a convoy—

Full of ich maner prey;
Of venisoun, and flesch, and brede,
Of brown ale, and win white and rede,
Of baudekins, and purple pall,
Of gold and silver, and cendal:[2]

[1] Arises.

[2] Baudkin was a rich and precious kind of cloth, composed of silk and gold thread. Cendal was also a kind of rich thin silken stuff, very highly esteemed.—See Halliwell's Dictionary of Archaisms, *in voce*.

and suddenly attacking the escort of five thousand horsemen, put them all to the sword, and seized the convoy, which they lodged in safety within the walls of Arundel. In returning from this capture they had an encounter with fifteen thousand Saracens, whom they also attacked and dispersed, after killing two or three giants who commanded them: but foreseeing that the enemy would be constantly strengthened by fresh reinforcements, they prudently secured their means of retreat into the forest. Oriens, on hearing of their success, became, as usual, very ferocious.

"Ah Mahoun!"[1] said Oriens, "tho
Thou nart[2] a god worth a sloe!
Therefore the folk thou dost no gode,
So for Christen doth her Gode!"

He then ordered forty thousand men to surround and destroy these insolent Christians: but they had already taken their measures, and under cover of the forest and of the night, retired with little loss to their several fastnesses.

Canto VIII.

Mirie it is in somer's tide;
Foules sing in forest wide;
Swaines gin on justing ride;
Maidens liffen hem in pride.

We have seen, that though Arthur had carried with him, to the assistance of Leodegan, the flower of British chivalry, a new race of heroes had since started up for the defence of the country. Gawain, his cousin Galachin, and his three brothers, together with Sagremor, already ranked with the most experienced commanders; and a new champion, the celebrated Ywain, was soon added to the number. It will be remembered that Urien

Hadde spoused Hermesent,
Blasine sister and Belisent.
Thai had a young man hem bitwen,

[1] Mahomet. [2] Art not

Michel Ywain, a noble stren.[1]
He was ycleped[2] michel Ywain,
For he hadde a brother knight, certain,
Bast Ywain he was yhote,
For he was bigeten a bast,[3] God it wote.
Urien, by another quen,
Yet hadde bigeten a gentil stren.
That was hoten Morganor;
A gode knight by Godis ore.[4]
He hadde made him in al heir
To the lond that of him com, veir.[5]
The lond that com of Hermesent
Was Ywain's, thurgh right descent.

Mickle Ywain made the same request to Hermesent which Galachin and Gawain had addressed to Blasine and Belisent, and was, like them, strongly encouraged to forward a reconciliation between Arthur and his father Urien. Hermesent provided for him a hundred knights, and three hundred young bachelors, candidates, like himself, for the order of knighthood, with a proper supply of horses and armour; and Ywain, having received the maternal benediction, departed with his bastard brother, and began his march "all by the forest of Bedingham, toward Arundel, in Cornwall."

His road lay through the territories of King Yder; but they were at that time overrun by innumerable swarms of Saracens; and their ravages were so extensive that the report of them reached the ears of Gawain, who immediately marched to the rescue of Yder at the head of thirty thousand men; and, passing from London through Carduel, arrived at Bedingham about the time when Ywain quitted it on his way to Arundel. Yder himself at the same moment resolved on trying the fate of a battle with the enemy; and, putting himself at the head of fifteen thousand men, was accidentally encountered by the rear guard of the great Saracen army. Yder, though he perceived the superior numbers of the heathen forces, attacked them without hesitation, broke them, and was making a dreadful carnage of the unbelievers,—when he was suddenly attacked by another division of their army,

[1] Progeny. [2] Called. [3] A bastard. [4] Grace. [5] Truly.

and owed his escape, together with that of a few attendants, to an unexpected diversion produced by Ywain, who issuing from the forest, and seeing the whole open country covered with enemies, instantly attacked the first who came in his way.

Ywain and his bastard brother were accompanied by a knight of great courage and experience named Ates, who quickly discovered, that, having passed a bridge, the only one which was to be found between Arundel and the forest which they had left, and this bridge having been immediately occupied by the Saracens, they had no longer any possibility of retreat. But the young bachelors made no reflections. By a desperate charge these four hundred destroyed five thousand infidels; and, finding themselves still "whole and sound," began to anticipate a splendid and complete victory.

At this time a *little knave* (*i. e.* boy) delivered to Gawain a letter, which he professed to bring from Ywain; and he, having perused it, immediately called to arms, and, dividing a part of his troops into five bodies of three thousand each, gave the command of them to Sagremor, Galachin, and his three brothers, taking to himself the conduct of the rear guard, consisting of eight thousand.

> The knave taught her way sikerlich,
> Thai riden wel serrelich;[1]
> Ther gilt pensel,[2] with the wind
> Mirie ratled, of cendal ynde.[3]
> The stedes, so noble and so wight,[4]
> Lopen[5] and neighed with the knight.
> These beth alle so fast coming;
> The children, that whiles, wer fighting, &c.

But to fight against such superiority of numbers as then assailed them was nearly hopeless, because they were gradually encompassed and attacked in every direction. Ywain now felt the consequences of the mistake which the more prudent Ates had discovered long before; and, in the hope of remedying it, proposed that they should unite all their efforts in one; make a violent charge towards the river; and, if it prove fordable, retreat through it into the forest.

[1] Banner. [2] Indian. [4] Strong. [5] Leapt.

But they were disappointed. The high banks of the river prevented all hope of escape, and beyond it they discovered fresh swarms of the enemy hastening towards the bridge. At this moment of desperation they beheld Agravain, who led the van of Gawain's forces, advancing rapidly to their assistance. They now again turned their horses, and, making a second effort, cut their way through the infidels, and joined their friends. The battle, being constantly supplied with fresh combatants by the successive succours of Gueheret, Gaheriet, Galachin, Sagremor, and Gawain, who were opposed by new reinforcements which arrived in the heathen army, was continued with great obstinacy; and our poet, who is never tired of describing such scenes, has painted every circumstance of the combat with the minuteness of an eye-witness, and with a degree of delight and satisfaction in which the modern reader would not easily participate. Suffice it to say, that, the sun approaching the meridian, Gawain's strength became double; and that of Ywain and the other Christian heroes being little diminished, they made as extensive a carnage amongst the infidels as the worst enemy of paganism could conscientiously wish to contemplate, and then marched in triumph and loaded with spoil to their former quarters at Bedingham.

Here Gawain was much surprised to learn that the letters "written in Latin," which had brought him so opportunely to the assistance of Ywain, were counterfeits. The reader is probably aware that the "little knave" who brought these letters, the "old churl" who had announced the danger of Sagremor, and the unknown knight who advised the timely retreat into Arundel, were the same person; and that Merlin, under these and similar disguises, superintended all the enterprises of the British heroes during the absence of Arthur. After refreshing themselves during a few days at Bedingham, they were again summoned in great haste to Arundel.

Kaydestran and Kehedin, two noble young bachelors, with twenty-seven companions, arriving within sight of the walls, fell in with a party of the enemy, whom they instantly overthrew; but, being at length surrounded by greater numbers, and in imminent danger of being captured, were rescued by a sally of three hundred young men from the garrison of the city. The leaders of this little band were Ywain with the

white hand, Ywain of Lyones, Ywain de la vis le bel, Ywain of Strangore, and Devidel the savage; all bachelors of approved courage, and all related to the family of Gawain. But before they could make good their retreat the whole were enveloped. At this instant Gawain arrived, and of course vanquished the infidels, rescued the Christian warriors, and was preparing to pursue the enemy, when Merlin, in the shape of an old knight, ordered him to enter Arundel with his young kinsmen, and there to wait for further instructions.

The infidels finding that the Britons could not be attacked with advantage in that part of the country, suddenly united all their forces, and, marching northwards, poured into Lothian, the territory of King Lot. That monarch, advancing against them with twenty thousand men, gained a great and bloody victory; but, having pursued his advantage too far, was totally defeated in his turn by a fresh army, and forced to take refuge, with only three thousand of his followers, in the city of Dorkeine. In this extremity he resolved, by the advice of his council, to make his way to the strong citadel of Glocedoine; to deposit there his wife Belisent and his infant son Modred, and to wait a more favourable opportunity of recovering his dominions.

Gawain was perfectly unconscious of the deplorable situation of his father, and was carelessly leaning with his companions on the walls of Arundel, when a strange knight, accoutred at all points, called to him precipitately to arm, and offered to conduct him to a scene where his assistance was wanted at that moment. Neither Gawain nor any of his companions knew Merlin in this disguise; but, having exacted from him an oath that his tale was strictly true, they hastily collected their forces, put themselves under his guidance, and galloped off in search of this unknown adventure.

In passing through a forest they met a knight coming towards them at full speed, and bearing in his arms a child, whom Gawain at once recognized as his brother Modred. The knight informed them that Lot, having been surprised during his march, was severely wounded, and perhaps killed or taken; that Belisent was in the hands of the enemy at a very small distance; and that he, having with difficulty rescued the infant, was attempting to bear him to some place of safety. Gawain ordered the knight to follow his troops,

and, keeping them concealed in the forest, cautiously proceeded towards the field of battle; where he soon discovered the infidel king, named Taurus, who, having seized a lady by the tresses of her hair, was endeavouring thus to draw her up and to fix her on his horse. This was Belisent. Her piteous cries for mercy reached the ears and thrilled the heart of Gawain, but, being mixed with invocations of the holy Virgin, drew down repeated buffets from the fist of the ruffian who held her. She fell from the horse's back; but Taurus still sustained her by the hair, scourged her, and bade her follow on foot; and when from weakness she entangled her feet in her long robes, and fell to the ground, he dismounted, tied her tresses to his horse's tail, and thus prepared to ride off with his mangled victim. But an attendant, seeing the rapid approach of Gawain, suddenly cut the lady's hair, and disengaged his master from this encumbrance.

Wawain with spors his stede smot,
And he forth sterte,[1] God it wot.
He gred[2] aloud to King Taurous,
"Abide! thou thief malicious!
Biche-son! thou drawest amiss!
Thou shalt abeye it ywiss!"[3]

Accordingly, though Taurus was of the same gigantic dimensions with the rest of the infidel chiefs, Gawain passed his spear through his shield, hauberk and heart, and threw him dead amongst his troops, who were speedily exterminated to a man. Belisent, who had fallen into a swoon, was not a little surprised, on first opening her eyes, to find herself attended by her four sons; and her wonder and joy were complete, when, having expressed her fears for the infant Modred, the child was restored to her in health and safety. She then related that Lot, with only three hundred knights, had been attacked by many thousands of the enemy; that after a long and desperate resistance, he had seen her torn from him by the miscreant Taurus; and had only consulted his own safety by flight, when, his attendants being nearly all killed, and himself wounded in fifteen places, he could no longer hope to render her any assistance.

[1] Started. [2] Cried. [3] Certainly expiate it.

Belisent was now placed on a litter; and, being supplied with all possible conveniences from the sumpter carts of Taurus, six hundred in number, which attended her march, was conveyed by easy journeys to London, where she was received by the gallant Sir Do, and lodged with proper magnificence in the royal palace.

All these events, it is to be observed, were dictated by Merlin himself to his old master Blaise,—so that their veracity is unquestionable; and we must now follow Merlin to the court of Leodegan, where he related them to Arthur and his companions. He then condescended to inform the king, that the motive of their visit to his court had been to procure a suitable wife for their gallant leader; upon which Leodegan, going in search of Guenever, presented her to Arthur, telling him that, whatever might be his rank, his merit was sufficient to entitle him to the possession of the heiress of Carmelide. Arthur having accepted the lady with the utmost gratitude, Merlin then proceeded to satisfy the king respecting the rank of his son-in-law; upon which Leodegan, with the knights of the round table and his other barons, proceeded to do homage to their legitimate suzerain, the successor of Uther Pendragon. The beauteous Guenever was then solemnly betrothed to Arthur; and a magnificent festival was proclaimed, which lasted seven days, and would have been protracted much longer, but that, fresh succours having arrived in the camp of Ryance, it became necessary to prepare for military operations.

Canto IX.

Mirie is June that scheweth flower
The meden ben[1] of swete odour;
Lily and rose of swete colour;
The river clear withouten sour[2];
This damiseles love paramour.

The whole of this canto, though it extends to no less than eleven hundred verses, is dedicated to the description of a

[1] Meads are.

[2] Dirt; filth. This word occurs in the Promptorium Parvulorum.

single battle, which ended in the final discomfiture of King Ryance, and thereby left Arthur at liberty to accomplish the great adventures to which he was destined. The troops of Leodegan were marshalled by the particular advice of Merlin: but we cannot discover any advantages which resulted from the scientific distribution recommended by the magician; the ultimate success being solely owing to the efforts of individual valour.

It was a Monday, festival of Pentecost, that had been previously chosen for this great contest. The Christian knights rose at daybreak, and arrayed themselves in their most sumptuous suits of armour, which were ornamented with gold, silver, and jewels. Arthur, always eager for battle, was now doubly so, because he was to be armed by the hands of the beauteous Guenever; but, as the pieces which composed this iron dress were very numerous, and as the lady, on lacing on each, was required to pay a kiss as the forfeit of her awkwardness, or to receive one as the reward of her dexterity, the length of the ceremony excited the impatience of Merlin, who sternly enjoined the young warrior to remember these kisses[1] in the hour of distress and difficulty.

The main body of the army was divided by Merlin into seven parts of seven thousand men each. Of the first he took the personal direction, and in this body were comprehended the formidable *forty-two*, and the two hundred and fifty knights of the round table: the number being completed by a selection from the bravest of Leodegan's vassals. The commanders of the other six divisions were Gogenar, Leodegan's nephew; Elmadas; Belich le blond; Yder of north-land; Kandon, nephew of Cleodalis; and Gempore molé; and besides these, a small but choice army of reserve, consisting of ten thousand men, was led by Leodegan in person, assisted by his good steward Cleodalis.

Merlin harangued the army, and promised them final success, notwithstanding the almost innumerable forces of the enemy, whom he proposed to surprise in their camp. This camp, it seems, was fortified on three sides; on the south by a rampart of wagons and carts, and on the west and east by a wall:

[1] One of the Northern chroniclers tells us that the "amusement of kissing" was not known to the ancient Britons, but that it was introduced into this country by a daughter of Hengist!

"but," said Merlin, "we shall attack them on the eastern side,

"And find them sleepand, and sle downright,
For thai wer all dronken tonight."

He then detached ten knights, with orders to destroy all the scouts who might give information of his approach; and, having unfurled his banner surmounted by the fiery dragon, advanced in silence to the camp, which he entered unperceived.

His first operation was to cast a spell into the air, by virtue of which great numbers of the tents fell down on the heads of the sleeping infidels; and it may be presumed, that those who were very drunken were irrecoverably stifled. Those who were more watchful or alert were punished for their sobriety by being trampled in their shirts under the horses' feet, or pierced by the lances of the assailants. Several thousands were thus slaughtered before a man in the camp had time to put on his armour. But at length a few knights appeared round the tent of King Ryance; these were followed by more; and, their numbers continually increasing, they were enabled to face the Christians, and began "one of the greatest battles that ever was smitten."

Passed was the day-springing,
The hot sunne was schining,
Tho began knightes riding,
Trumpes beting, tambours dassing;[1]
Ther was fleing and withstonding,
Tiring, togging,[2] and overthrowing!

Among the knights who distinguished themselves in this terrible day was one whom the author is particularly desirous to recommend to the grateful remembrance of his hearers. This was Nacien, a knight of great prowess and merit, and allied to many of the most renowned heroes of chivalry. His mother was Hamignes, sister to Joseph, a *knight of grace*, through whom he was cousin to the noble Perceval. His father was Ebron, who had sixteen more sons, all knights of great virtue; and through him Nacien was cousin to Celidoine the rich, son of Nacien of Betica, which Celidoine first saw all

[1] Beating. [2] Tearing; tugging.

mervail of the San Gréal. Nacien was also *sibbe* (i. e. ated) to King Pelles of Listoneis,

> And sith then hadde Launcelot
> In his ward almost a yer,
> *So the Romauns seyth elles where*:[1]
> This Naciens, of whom y write,
> Sith then bicom eremite[2];
> And lette knightschippe and al thing,
> And bicome preste, messe to sing.
> Virgin of his bodi he was,
> Whom sith then the holi Godes grace
> Ravist into the thridde heven,
> Where he herde angels' steven[3];
> And seighe Fader, Son, and Holi Ghost,
> In on substaunce, in on acost.
> This gave sith then the riche conseil
> To the King Arthour, saunfaile,
> Tho he was in gret peril
> To lese his londes, and ben exil,
> Ogaines the king Galahos,
> The geaumtes sone, of gret los,[4]
> That gaf King Arthour batailing, &c.

Nacien was accompanied by Adregain the Brown; and these ro had the honour of accompanying Arthur in a desperate tack on the standard of King Ryance, which represented ur elephants with their castles. About this time the conflict came general all over the field; and the author has exhausted his powers of description in painting the horrors of e scene.

> Al so thick the arwe schoten,[5]
> In sunne-beam so doth the moten.
> Gavelokes[6] al so thick flowe
> So gnattes, ichil abowe.[7]
> Ther was so michel dust rising,
> That sene there nas sunne schining.
> The trumping and the tabouring

[1] All this information, as well as that which is alluded to in the subsequent passage, is now lost.
[2] A hermit. [3] Voice; song. [4] Glory.
[5] Arrows shot. [6] Javelins. [7] I will avow or maintain.

Did togeder the knights fling.
The knights broken her speren
On thre[1], thai smiten and to-teren.[2]
Knightes and stedes ther laien about,
The hevedes off smitten, the guttes out.
Heveden,[3] and fete, and armes, there
Lay strewed everich where
Under stedes' fete, so thick
In crowe's nest so doth the stick.
Sum sterven,[4] and sum gras gnowe;[5]
The gode steden her guttes drewe,
With blodi sadels in that pres.
Of swich bataile was no ses,[6]
To the night fram amorwe,[7]
It was a bataile of gret sorowe!

The main body of the Christian army, being overpowered by superior numbers, were at length driven in confusion under the walls of Denebleise; but again rallying, drove back their pursuers, and gave time to the knights of Arthur's company to refresh themselves, and to relieve their horses, who were incapable of carrying, during many hours, the enormous weight of iron which covered their riders. Merlin then, having at leisure taken his survey of the field, ordered his company to mount, and led them at full speed to the part of the battle where he discovered the "crowns and beards," which were painted on the shield of King Ryance.

Arthur, glad of encountering the Irish monarch, made a violent blow at him, which cut off a quarter of his helmet, divided his shield, and falling on his shoulder, would have slit him to the middle, had not the sword been stopped by the toughness of a serpent's skin which he wore over his shirt. He fell to the ground: and though he was speedily replaced on his horse; though Arthur himself was overthrown and unhorsed by the crowd of giants who pressed forward to rescue their leader; the attack had been so well directed, that the great standard was taken, the infidels who guarded it dispersed in all directions, and Ryance at length, after an obstinate conflict, was obliged to fly before the victorious

[1] Into three parts. [2] Tear in pieces. [3] Heads. [4] Perished. [5] Gnawed the grass, died. [6] Cessation. [7] The morning.

hur, who, singling him out from his companions, pursued
1 incessantly, and at length overtook him when on the
nt of joining another division of his army. At this second
ounter Ryance received a dangerous and painful wound in
side, and dropped his excellent sword called Marandoise,
ich became the prey of Arthur.

As Escalibore was certainly the best sword in the world,
hur seems to have had little occasion for Marandoise: but
re is perhaps a pleasure in cutting off infidel heads with
infidel weapon; and in this pleasure Arthur indulged as
g as his horse was able to carry him. In the mean time,
rlin had pursued a party of the flying enemy to a conside-
le distance, and had cast an enchantment on them, by
ns of which they mistook a valley which lay before them
a deep and spacious lake, into which they declined to
ture—

> Hereafter sone, in this write[1],
> Why he did it ye shal it wite.[2]

; unfortunately this important piece of information is lost
osterity, because the whole remainder of the poem, as it
r exists, is employed in describing the confused scene of
ghter which followed the wound and flight of King Ryance.
he number of the infidels was still so great, and the field
battle so extensive, that no eye but that of a conjuror was
able of comprehending the whole scene; and Merlin alone
aware, that whilst the army of Leodegan was beginning
triumph in all quarters, the monarch himself was in the
atest jeopardy. Being accidentally separated from his
y of knights, and attended only by his faithful steward
odalis, he had been suddenly attacked by a large troop of
enemy, and had seen his good steward unhorsed at the
t onset. A dreadful blow from Colocaulucon, *a huge man*,
ught the king also to the ground, and with such violence,
t it was long before he began to exhibit any signs of life.
odalis, however, who was already on his feet, bestrode the
y of his master, and, wielding his sword on all sides,
fully repelled the crowd of assailants till the king re-
ered his senses. Leodegan now recollected what the
ler will perhaps have forgotten; viz., that he was then

[1] Writing; work. [2] Know.

living in adultery with the beautiful wife of this go
ward, and, kneeling before him, humbly implored his f
ness in a long oration, concluding with

"Forgive me now my trespas
That I thee have done, alas!
I pray thee, that never this misdede
My soul into helle lede!"

Cleodalis, of course, forgave him as fast as he cou
only because he wished to waive a disagreeable subje
because, as he properly observed to his master, thei
efforts were at this moment very necessary to preserv
both from being killed or captured. In fact, they were
nately felled to the ground so often, that their streng
at last completely exhausted; and they were on the p
being carried off by the enemy, when Merlin, who pr
knew exactly their powers of endurance, and had be
willing to interrupt the very edifying scene of their
ciliation, arrived with his knights, mounted them b
fresh horses, and in an instant destroyed their pertin
assailants. Arthur, Ban, Bohort, Nacien, and their
panions, who by Merlin's directions had taken time
themselves and their horses, now dispersed themselve
the field, and cut to pieces all the infidel leaders who
their way:

The other paiens flowen swithe,[1]
And our went again, bilive,[2]
Into the cité of Carohaise;
With her faren[3] hem made at aise;[4]
They maden grete bliss and fest,
And after, yeden[5] hem to rest.

Thus ends this fragment of more than ten thousand
the transcriber, as it should seem, thinking that he also
right to rest from his labour, which he had not the cou
resume. The remainder of the column was occupied l
of another romance, which, as Sir W. Scott informs
totally effaced.

[1] Flew quickly. [2] Immediately. [3] Companions. [4] Ease. [5]

MORTE ARTHUR.

This romance was never printed,[1] but exists in MS. in the Harleian library, No. 2252. The late Mr. Ritson was of opinion that it was versified from the prose work of the same name, written by Malory, and printed by Caxton; in proof of which, he contended that the style is marked by an evident affectation of antiquity, But in truth it differs most essentially from Malory's work, which was a mere compilation; whilst it follows, with tolerable exactness, the French romance of Lancelot; and its phraseology, which much resembles that of Chester, and other authors of the fifteenth century, betrays no marks of affectation.

As this romance contains only the concluding scenes of the life of Arthur, and as Sir Lancelot, the hero of the piece, has not been introduced, in the preceding fragment, to the reader's acquaintance, it may be proper in this place to give a short sketch of his antecedent history.

King Ban, whose acts of prowess we have so often witnessed, having returned in his old age to Britany, was again attacked by his inveterate enemy Claudas; and after a long war saw himself reduced to the possession of a single fortress, the impregnable castle of Trible, where he was besieged by the enemy. In this extremity, he determined to solicit the assistance of Arthur, and escaped in a dark night with his infant son Lancelot and his queen Helen, leaving the castle of Trible in the hands of his seneschal, who immediately betrayed the place to Claudas. The flames of his burning citadel reached the eyes of the unfortunate monarch during his flight, and he expired with grief. The wretched Helen, abandoning for a moment the care of her infant son, flew to the assistance of her husband, and, returning after a fruitless attempt to restore his life, discovered the little Lancelot in the arms of a nymph, who on her approach suddenly sprung with the child into a deep lake, and instantly disappeared. This nymph was the beautiful Vivian, the mistress of the

[1] Printed by the Roxburghe Club, 4to. 1819.

enchanter Merlin, who thought fit to undertake the education of the infant hero at her court, which was situated within this imaginary lake; and hence her pupil was afterwards distinguished by the name of Lancelot du Lac.

The queen, after this double loss, retired to a convent, where she was soon joined by the widow of Bohort; for this good king, on learning the death of his brother, died also of grief, leaving two infant sons, Lyonel and Bohort; who having been for some time secreted by a faithful knight, named Farien, from the fury of Claudas, were afterwards carried off by the lady of the lake, and educated in company with their cousin Lancelot.

The fairy, when her pupil had attained the age of eighteen, conveyed him to the court of Arthur, for the purpose of demanding his admission to the honour of knighthood; and at the first appearance of the youthful candidate, the graces of his person, which were not inferior to his courage and activity, made an instantaneous and indelible impression on the heart of Guenever, while her charms inspired him with an equally ardent and constant passion. The amours of these lovers throw a very singular colouring over the whole history of Arthur. It is for the sake of Guenever that the amorous Lancelot achieves the conquest of Northumberland; that he defeats Gallehaut, king of the marches, who afterwards becomes his secret and most attached confident; that he cleaves down numberless giants, and lays whole cargoes of tributary crowns at the feet of his suzerain, finding, in his stolen interviews with the queen, an ample indemnification for his various hardships and labours. But this is not all. Arthur, deceived by the artifices of the false Guenever, who was, as we have seen, the illegitimate daughter of Leodegan, declares her the partner of his throne, and dismisses his queen to a distant province; where she is immediately joined by her lover, and follows without restraint the natural bent of her inclinations. Yet Lancelot is dissatisfied; it is necessary to the dignity of his mistress, that she should still share the bed of Arthur, and that, protected in the reputation by the sword of her lover, she should lead a life of ceremonious and splendid [illegible]tery. This point is accomplished, and their intercourse continues as usual. The prose romance of Lancelot is [illegible]y composed of shreds and patches, and is too long

for abridgment; but there is a metrical romance respecting this hero, composed by Chrestien de Troyes in the twelfth century, and called "La Charette," which has the air of being translated from a Breton lay, and seems to possess considerable merit. It is analysed in the Bibliothèque des Romans (April 1777) from a MS. belonging to the Comte de Caylus; but such readers as have not an opportunity of consulting that work may perhaps be glad to find here an abridged paraphrase of this ancient and curious poem.

At a festival of the Ascension, while Arthur, surrounded by his knights, was still at table, an unknown knight completely armed, and having his vizor lowered so as to conceal his features, entered the hall, and requested a boon from the king and queen; which they inconsiderately granted. Then assuming a sterner tone, he said, "Sir king, I have in my prisons many dames and damsels of thy court, whom I will keep in thy despite, unless thou find a knight hardy enough to attempt their deliverance by justing with me. I will wait in the adjoining wood. Should I be unhorsed, I promise to deliver all my prisoners; but I require that thy queen accompany thy champion,—so that, if victorious, I may carry both together into captivity."

Sir Kay the seneschal, constantly eager for adventures, which as constantly brought him to disgrace, immediately claimed this also; and Arthur, blinded by his indignation, accepted the offer, observing that the *felon*[1]-knight did not deserve a nobler adversary. The other tauntingly replied, that a short time would show whether he deserved such a reproachful appellation; that he should expect to meet Sir Kay with no other company than that of the queen; but that half an hour would decide their contest,—after which he should be ready to meet a new combatant.

The tone in which these words were pronounced somewhat disconcerted Sir Kay, and alarmed Arthur, who, having passed his word, could no longer recede. Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain, boiling with impatience, armed themselves, leaped upon their horses, counted every minute as it passed, and at the expiration of the half-hour galloped at full speed to the field of battle, which was not more than a thousand

[1] Wicked; cruel. It has no connexion with the usual modern meaning of the term.

paces distant from the hall. They arrived, however, too late. Sir Kay had been unhorsed, dreadfully bruised, bound hand and foot, and carried off, together with the queen; but as there were two roads which proceeded from the place of combat, it was impossible to guess which they had followed. Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain therefore separated. The former, urging his horse to its utmost speed, and hoping at every instant to gain sight of the fugitives, met with a deep rut, in which his courser fell and broke his leg. The knight, almost frantic with rage, proceeded on foot with as much speed as his heavy armour would permit, and at length overtook a cart, driven by a very deformed dwarf; who, on being questioned concerning the route of the fugitives, professed to have seen them, and promised, if the hero would mount his cart, that he would soon put him into the proper road.

It seems that carts were at this time extremely scarce. One was thought sufficient for a moderate town; because they were only used for the purpose of carrying out filth, or of conveying criminals to the place of execution. Lancelot was perhaps ignorant of this, or perhaps indifferent about the mode of conveyance, provided he had a chance of overtaking his mistress: he therefore placed himself as commodiously as he could in this uncouth equipage, and only lamented that after much jolting he made little progress. In the mean time, the road which Gawain followed had insensibly led him into that of Lancelot. He met the dwarf; to whom, without noticing his friend, he put the same questions, and received the same answer: but being on horseback, he of course declined the proposition; and, having then recognised the other knight, strongly but ineffectually represented to him the indecorum of such a mode of travelling.

At night-fall they arrived at a castle, the lady of which immediately came out at the head of her damsels to welcome Sir Gawain, but was with difficulty induced to admit within her walls his companion, whom she supposed to be a criminal, or at least a prisoner. At supper, Sir Lancelot was on the point of being consigned to the kitchen, and only admitted to the lady's table at the earnest solicitation of Sir Gawain; but no entreaties could persuade the damsels to prepare a bed for him. He seized the first which he found unoccupied, and slept quietly till morning.

The windows of the castle commanded an extensive view of the country: and Lancelot, having observed at some distance on the plain a procession accompanying a lady in a veil, in whom he recognised a likeness to the fair Guenever, suddenly fell down in a swoon; an accident very usual with amorous knights, but always productive of wonder and curiosity in the by-standers. The lady of the castle imputed it to shame and vexation at the recollection of the disgraceful cart; but Gawain, on his friend's recovery, thought his suspicion very probable, and became equally eager to depart. Their fair hostess supplied Lancelot with a horse and spear; they traverse the plain at full speed; and learn from some travellers that the lady whom they had discovered was in fact the lovely Guenever; that she was led captive by Meleagans, son of Brademagus, king of Goire; and that there were but two roads which led to her intended prison, both of which were known to abound in the most perilous adventures. Here, therefore, the friends again separated. Lancelot, after encountering and overcoming numerous obstacles, was accosted on the evening of the second day by a young and sportive beauty, who gaily proposed to him a supper in her castle; giving him at the same time to understand, that their repast would not be interrupted by the presence of any third person. The knight, who was hungry and weary, and whose horse was almost exhausted, accepted the proposal, though with no very good grace; supped voraciously; demanded a separate room; and, without paying any attention to some very intelligible glances, retired to rest, and slept most obstinately till his slumbers were disturbed by loud and shrill shrieks proceeding from the lady's apartment. He hastily put on his armour, and, proceeding to the place, found her struggling in the embraces of a knight, whom he instantly attacked, and would have punished for his insolence but for the interposition of six attendants, who jointly assaulted our hero and rescued the ravisher. He now turned his arms against these new enemies, cut off the hand of one, the head of another, and pierced a third through the body; but was much surprised, when, in the midst of his career, the whole scene vanished, and he found that his fair entertainer was no other than his guardian fairy, who had put him to this trial of his fidelity and courage, and who now declared him worthy

of her future protection. Lancelot again retired to rest, and on the next day the fairy condescended to conduct him into the direct road. After some hours, she led him to a fountain, where they alighted to refresh their horses; and the fairy, pointing out to Lancelot a comb of ivory inlaid with gold, and a ringlet of most beautiful hair, which lay on the grass, informed him that they belonged to his lovely queen, who had stopped there on the preceding day, and whose traces he would now find it easy to follow. Lancelot, after kissing the precious comb with great fervency, and placing the ringlet near his heart, took leave of the fairy; from whom he received, together with assurances of her further assistance, a ring, which, by its changes of colour, had the virtue of discovering and rendering nugatory all enchantments intended to delay his progress.

The knight pursued his journey without being much incommoded, except by the bad jokes of numerous travellers, all of whom seemed to have learned by inspiration his disgraceful airing in the cart. One, more insolent than the rest, had the audacity to interrupt him during dinner, and even to risk a battle in support of his pleasantry. Lancelot, after an easy victory, only doomed him to be carted in his turn; but, learning from a fair damsel, his accuser, that his morality was still more execrable than his wit, provoked him to a second combat, and cut off his head; which the lady carried away with great marks of satisfaction.

At night, the hero was received in another castle with great apparent hospitality, but found himself in the morning in a dungeon, and loaded with chains. Consulting his ring, and finding that this was an enchantment, he burst his chains, seized his armour in spite of the visionary monsters who attempted to defend it, broke open the gates of the tower, and continued his journey. At length his progress was checked by a wide and rapid torrent, which could only be passed by walking on the edge of a vast and sharp scimitar. Lancelot, leading his horse by the bridle, and causing him to swim by his side, advanced without hesitation upon this very inconvenient bridge, and reached the opposite bank after cutting his feet to the bone. He next, wounded as he was, attacked killed a lion and a leopard, who opposed his landing; hen, having seated himself on the grass, was endeavour-

ing to stop with his handkerchief the effusion of blood, which was very considerable, when he was accosted by Brademagus, father of Meleagans, whose castle was then in sight, and at no great distance. This king, not less courteous than his son was haughty and insolent, after complimenting him on the valour and skill with which he had achieved the passage of the bridge, offered him his assistance; and, on being questioned respecting Guenever, replied that she was safe in his castle, from whence she might be rescued by any knight who should succeed in conquering Meleagans. Lancelot immediately demanded the battle for next day; and the proper preparations being made, it took place at the foot of the tower, and under the eyes of the fair captive. The contest would have been very short, had her lover retained his usual strength and activity; but, almost fainting from the anguish of his wounds and from continued loss of blood, he began to stagger and give way, when Guenever exclaimed, "Ah, Lancelot, my knight! truly have I been told that thou art no longer worthy of me." The voice and presence of his mistress, and this strange reproach which he was unconscious of having merited, instantly revived the drooping knight; who, resuming at once his usual superiority, soon laid at his feet his haughty adversary, and was on the point of sacrificing him to his resentment, when Guenever, moved by the earnest entreaties of Brademagus, ordered him to withhold the blow. He did so, and even pardoned a base attempt of his prostrate enemy to stab him at the moment of his generous forbearance. The castle and all its prisoners were now at his disposal; but he consented, at the request of Brademagus, to give his promise of meeting Meleagans at the expiration of a twelvemonth, at the court of Arthur, and of there renewing the contest for a prize which was already his own by the right of conquest.

Lancelot flew to the apartment of the queen, threw himself at her feet, and prepared to kiss her hand, when she exclaimed, "Ah, Lancelot! why do I see thee again without daring to think thee worthy of me, after thou hast been disgracefully drawn about the country in ————" She had not time to finish the phrase; for her lover suddenly started from her, and, loudly lamenting that he had incurred the contempt and indignation of his lady, rushed out of the castle,

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

disastrous seneschal produced his two gloves, and protested that he had neither a third hand which had been deprived of its covering, nor any wound on his person from whence the blood could have proceeded: the combat was proclaimed; and he was forced to prepare for the loss of a second battle, as he had no reason to hope for the appearance of any other champion.

Another champion however did appear, and the heart of Meleagans immediately told him that this was no other than the formidable Lancelot. His guardian fairy had restored to him his horse and arms; his recent wounds were perfectly healed; and the perjured Meleagans, covered with bruises, was again compelled, in the sight of his father and of his subjects, to implore the mercy of his conqueror, who, at parting, had the generosity to renew the promise of meeting him at Arthur's court after the expiration of a twelvemonth. Lancelot now departed with the queen, the seneschal, and the other prisoners; and, taking the road by which they expected the arrival of Gawain, had the satisfaction of meeting him on the second day; after which, the whole company proceeded gaily towards Cardigan. But the malicious ingenuity of Meleagans was not yet exhausted. A vile little dwarf, who was stationed at the side of the road, contrived, by tearing his ugly hair and shedding torrents of tears, to interest the generous Lancelot in favour of a supposed lady, who was represented as exposed to every sort of indignity in a neighbouring castle. The incautious knight, after assuring his companions that this adventure could not last long, and that he would speedily rejoin them, consented to follow the treacherous dwarf, fell into an ambush which was prepared for him, and was plunged into a dungeon. Gawain and the queen, after waiting for him in vain during a day and a night, were obliged to resume their journey, and arrived without him at Cardigan.[1]

After an imprisonment of six months, during which Arthur in vain attempted to gain any information concerning him, he appeared for a moment, and again as suddenly vanished, without revealing to any one the place of his habitation. The following are the circumstances of this event:—

The damsels of Arthur's court obtained his permission, and

[1] Here ends the composition of Chrestien de Troyes; the remainder is by Geoffroy de Ligny.

that of Guenever, to proclaim a solemn tournament, the conditions of which were, that the victor knight should have a right to select the most beautiful of them as his wife; and that her dower should be formed from the sale of the horses and arms of the vanquished. The singularity of the proposal attracted crowds of combatants, who, dividing themselves into troops, contested the prize with various success, till an unknown knight, suddenly entering the lists, attacked the rival parties in turns, and, forcing them one upon another, drove the whole before him to the extremity of the lists. Guenever, suspecting from the unparalleled address of the stranger that he could be no other than Lancelot, sent to him one of her damsels, with this message: "Sir knight, the queen orders that at the instant thou shalt suffer thyself to be conquered." In a moment he appeared awkward and irresolute; lost ground; retreated, amidst the shouts and laughter of the spectators, to the further end of the lists; and was preparing to quit them altogether, when a second message ordered him to reassume his former superiority. He obeyed; and, turning on his pursuers with the rapidity of lightning, overthrew them all in succession, collected their horses into a body, drew them up before the queen's balcony; and, having desired that she would cause them to be sold, and distribute the purchase money among her damsels, made a low bow, and returned at full speed to his prison, leaving Guenever in the utmost astonishment at his sudden apparition.

It seems that the seneschal who had the custody of Lancelot, being obliged to leave the castle during some days, intrusted the prisoner to the care of his wife; and the wife, thinking it a great pity do detain such a handsome knight in a dungeon, gave him his liberty for a week, and even supplied him with her husband's horse and armour, on his promise to return, at the expiration of the term, to his confinement. The seneschal returning a little too soon was much alarmed at his wife's indiscretion, and hastened to impart his fears to Meleagans, who, however, laughed at his apprehension; assuring him that the promise of Lancelot was sacred; but at the same time advised him to treat his prisoner in future with increased severity. The barbarous order was obeyed; the knight, chained to the ground and imperfectly fed on bread and water, daily lost his health and vigour; the year was

nearly expired; and all the efforts of Guenever to obtain any news of her champion having proved fruitless, the triumph of Meleagans appeared to be secure.

But at this critical moment a young and beautiful lady, surrounded by guards, and followed by a splendid retinue, arrived at the fatal castle. The seneschal recognised in her features the charming daughter of Brademagus, and sister of his master Meleagans; listened with respectful credulity to a long story respecting the motives of her journey; and submissively executed the various orders which she issued with an air of conscious authority. She slept in the castle; and next morning, complaining that her rest had been disturbed by the groans of a prisoner, directed that he should be instantly released; received him with the most marked distinction; administered to him such restoratives as immediately renewed his health and strength; armed him with her own hands; supplied him with an excellent war-horse; and, to the utter astonishment of the seneschal, carried him off to the court of Arthur. At the moment of entering the city of Cardigan, she made herself known to Lancelot as the lady of the lake, his guardian fairy, and honouring him with a kiss on the forehead, vanished from his sight.

Meleagans, true to his appointment, was already in the lists, braving all the round table, and loudly calling on Lancelot, whose appearance to meet the challenge he naturally considered as impossible. Again and again he repeated his defiance; but at last a well-known voice answered, "Behold me! let us begin the combat." Though appalled by the consciousness of his crimes, and by the recollection of his rival's superiority, the wretched man summoned all his resolution, and, being animated by despair, defended his life with great skill and obstinacy: but his utmost efforts could only delay the triumph of Sir Lancelot, who, after piercing him to the heart, received the crown of victory from the hands of his royal mistress.

Thus ends the romance of La Charette, the joint work of Chrestien de Troyes and of Geoffroy de Ligny; to the former of whom we owe the story of Le Chevalier au Lion, the original of a most beautiful old English poem called Ywain and Gawain, translated, (as I suspect) by Clerk of Tranent, and published by the late Mr. Ritson. We now proceed to the

romance of Morte Arthur, which, as we have already observed, is translated from a French prose romance of the same name, forming, in the printed copies of the romance of Lancelot du Lac, the fifth and last part of that story. It also exists in MS. in Douce's library at Oxford, and at the Museum.

The knights of the round table had completed the quest of the San-Gréal, and had firmly established the empire of Arthur, by the defeat of all his enemies. Four years of peace and tranquillity had been endured by these august personages with tolerable patience: but at length they became tired of living on the recollection of old adventures, and anxious to achieve new ones; and Arthur joyfully adopted the advice of Guenever, to proclaim a solemn tournament at Winchester, under the direction of Sir Galehaut.

The king, not less impatient than his knights for this festival, set off some days before to superintend the preparations, leaving the queen with her court at Camalot. Sir Lancelot, under pretext of indisposition, remained behind also; and Sir Agravain staid to watch the conduct of the lovers. They, however, at this time disappointed his malice. Lancelot meant no more than to attend the tournament in disguise; and, having communicated his project to his mistress, mounted his horse, set off without any attendant, and counterfeiting the feebleness of age, took the most unfrequented road to Winchester, and passed unnoticed, as an old knight who was going to be a spectator of the sports. Even Arthur and Ywain, who happened to behold him from the windows of a castle under which he passed, were the dupes of his disguise. But an accident betrayed him. His horse happened to stumble; and the hero, forgetting for a moment his assumed character, recovered the animal with a strength and agility so peculiar to himself, that they instantly recognised the inimitable Lancelot. They, however, suffered him to proceed on his journey without interruption, convinced that his extraordinary feats of arms must discover him at the approaching festival.

In the evening, Lancelot was magnificently entertained, as a stranger knight, at the neighbouring castle of Ascalot. The lord of this castle had a daughter of exquisite beauty; and two sons, lately received into the order of knighthood, one of

whom was at that time sick in bed, and thereby prevented from attending the tournament, for which the two brothers had long made the necessary preparations. Lancelot offered to attend the other, if he were permitted to borrow the armour of the invalid; and the lord of Ascalot, without knowing the name of his guest, being satisfied from his appearance that his son could not have a better assistant in arms, most thankfully accepted the offer. In the mean time, the young lady, who had been much struck by the first appearance of the stranger knight, continued to survey him with increased attention, and, before the conclusion of supper, became so deeply enamoured of him, that, after frequent changes of colour, and other symptoms which the experienced Sir Lancelot could not possibly mistake, she was obliged to retire to her chamber, where she threw herself on her bed, and lay drowned in tears.

Lancelot wist what was her will;
Well he knew by other mo:[1]
Her brother cleped[2] he him till;[3]
And to her chamber gonne they go.

He set him down, for the maiden's sake,
Upon her bed, there she lay;
Courteously to her he spake,
For to comfort that fair may.[4]
In her arms she gan him take,
And these wordes gan she say:
"Sir, bot gif that ye it make,
Save my life no leech[5] may!"

"Lady," he said, "thou must let;[6]
For me, (ne give thee nothing ill!)
In another stede[7] mine heart is set;
It is not at mine owne will.
In earth is nothing that shall me let
To be thy knight, loud and still[8];
Another time we may be met,
When thou may better speak thy fill."

[1] More. [2] Called. [3] To. [4] Maiden. [5] Doctor. [6] Desist; refrain. [7] Place. [8] That is, "in the noise of battle, and in the silence of peace." It seems to be a foolish but very common phrase, generally used as a mere expletive for convenience of the rhyme.

" Sith I of thee ne may have more,
As thou art hardy knight and free[1],
In the tournament that thou would bear
Some sign of mine that men might see!"
" Lady, thy sleeve thou shalt off sheer,
I wol it take for the love of thee;
So did I never no lady's ere[2],
But one, that most hath loved me."

This negotiation being thus adjusted, Lancelot set off
morning with the young knight; who, on his objecti
lodgings in the city of Winchester, where he probably
have been easily recognized, conducted him to the castl
lady, sister to the lord of Ascalot, by whom they were
nificently entertained. The next day, after the usual r
they put on their armour, which was perfectly plair
without any device, as was usual to youths during th
year of knighthood, their shields being only painted r
some colour was necessary to enable them to be recogni
their attendants. Lancelot wore on his crest the sleeve
maid of Ascalot, and thus equipped proceeded to the t
ment, where the knights were divided into two compani
one commanded by Sir Galehaut, the other by King A
Having surveyed the combat for a short time from w
the lists, and observed that Sir Galehaut's party began t
way, they joined the press, and attacked the royal knigh
young man choosing such adversaries as were suited
strength; whilst his companion selected the principal
pions of the round table, and successively overthrew
Bohort, and Lyonel. The astonishment of the spectato
extreme,—for it was thought that no one but Lancelot
possess such invincible force,—and at the same time the
on his crest seemed to preclude the possibility of hi
thus disguised. At length, Sir Hector, Lancelot's b
rode to attack the wonderful stranger, and, after a d
combat, wounded him dangerously in the head; b
himself completely stunned by a blow on the helm
felled to the ground, together with his horse: after
the conqueror rode off at full speed, attended by hi
panion.

[1] Noble. [2] Before.

Having reached the forest, he pulled up his vizor to remove the blood, which nearly filled his eyes; and, finding himself in great pain, readily consented to follow the young knight to the castle of the noble lady with whom they had lodged on the preceding day. A skilful leech was summoned, who, having examined the wound, declared that long rest and great attention were necessary to his recovery. In the mean time Arthur was so anxious to know the name of the victor, that he proclaimed a second tournament, to be holden at the expiration of a month, in hopes of attracting him to Winchester, and thereby making the discovery; and, in fact, Sir Lancelot, on hearing the news, determined, weak as he was, to re-enter the lists: but at his first effort to rise from his bed his wound opened; he swooned from loss of blood; and his leech having threatened him with certain death if he should repeat the attempt, he was condemned to lie still; whilst Arthur, who could obtain no news of the unknown knight, returned unsatisfied to Camalot.

No sooner was Lancelot able to mount his horse than his young friend caused him to be conveyed to the castle of Ascalot, where he was attended with the greatest care by the good earl, by his two sons, and above all by his fair daughter, whose medical skill probably much hastened the period of his convalescence. His health was almost completely restored, when Sir Hector, Sir Bohort, and Sir Lyonel, who, immediately after the return of the court to Camalot, had undertaken the *quest* of their relation, unexpectedly discovered him walking on the walls of the castle. Their meeting was very joyful; for, though Arthur's knights frequently took a pleasure in secreting themselves from their friends, they were always marvellously delighted at being found by them. They passed three days in the castle amidst constant festivities, and bantered each other on the events of the preceding tournament; Lancelot, though he began by vowing vengeance against the author of his wound, having ended by declaring it extremely pleasant to be so forcibly convinced of his brother's extraordinary prowess. He then dismissed them with a message to the queen, promising to follow immediately, it being necessary that he should take a formal leave of his kind hosts, as well as of the fair maid of Ascalot. The young lady, after vainly attempting to detain him by her tears and solicitations, said,

"Sir, gif that your wille it were,
Sith I of thee ne may have mair,
Some thing ye wolde be-leave[1] me here
To look on, when me longeth sare!"

Lancelot spoke with herte free,
For to comfort that lady hend,[2]
"Mine armure shall I leave with thee,
And in thy brother's will I wend.
Look then, ne long not after me,
For here I may no longer lend;[3]
Long time ne shall it nought be
That I ne shall either come or send."

In the mean time, the three knights had delivered their message to Guenever, who was in paroxysms of joy at the expected return of her lover; and had then proceeded to announce to the king, who was hunting with Gawain, the news of their having discovered Sir Lancelot. Gawain, impatient to see him, immediately took leave of the king, and rode with all speed to Ascalot: but the knight was already gone. He was, however, sumptuously entertained, and, in answer to his questions, was distinctly informed by the earl's daughter, that she had bestowed her heart upon his friend, and that she had good reason to flatter herself with being the lady of his affections; as a pledge of which he had left with her his well-known suit of armour. Gawain, though at first incredulous, could not resist this apparently decisive testimony; and, after requesting the maiden that he also might, for Lancelot's sake, have the honour of being admitted amongst her knights, took his leave, and returned to court.

Several days passed away, during which the absent knight was most anxiously expected: yet he did not appear; and his return was so long protracted, that Arthur began to express the utmost fear for his safety,—insisting that, if his wounds had not opened afresh, it was impossible that he should so long delay the execution of his promise. Gawain replied by expatiating on the charms of the maid of Ascalot; related the story which had been confided to him; and observed, that such an adventure would be a legitimate excuse for a much

[1] Leave. [2] Gentle. [3] Tarry.

longer absence. This conversation, which took place in the presence of Guenever, sunk deep into her heart; she retired to her chamber; abandoned herself to the most violent transports of jealousy; and secluded from all but her confidential attendants, left King Arthur and his courtiers to amuse themselves without her; which they were so little able to do, that the court became the abode of fixed dulness and melancholy. Lancelot was, during all this time, very unnecessarily leading a life of solitude at a hermitage in the forest; where being accidentally found at last by Hector and Lyonel, he heard all the strange conjectures to which his absence had given rise, as well as the despair of his disconsolate mistress, and was easily induced to gratify all parties by his return.

The joy produced by his appearance was excessive. Arthur, who was sitting with Gawain in a watch-tower, discovered him at a distance on the plain; ran out of the gates to meet him, at the head of all his knights; kissed and embraced him; and assisted with his own hands in preparing for him a bed of honour covered with cloth of gold. All flocked round him, anxious to render him any service; plied him with questions; listened to his adventures; almost stifled him with embraces; and waited on him with such assiduity, that he could not, during the first three days, find a single opportunity of seeing his mistress without a crowd of witnesses. But the important occupation of hunting could not be long neglected; and Arthur having repaired to the forest *to play*, Lancelot, by staying at home with Hector and Lyonel, found at last a pretext for paying his court to the queen. Guenever, feeling quite convinced of his infidelity, thought herself fully justified in reproaching him with his passion for the maid of Ascalot; which, she observed, however justified by that lady's superior charms, unfortunately tended to lessen his reputation, by giving him a disgust for those nobler pursuits in which his eminence over all the knights of the world was hitherto so well established. She, however, trusted to his honour, and hoped that his new passion would never induce him to betray the intimacy in which he had lived with one who, however inferior to her rival in beauty, had at least proved the sincerity and constancy of her affection. This address was certainly intended to extort a justification, which she ardently wished to hear; but it produced a contrary effect.

"Madam," he said, "for cross and rood,
What betokeneth all this moan?
By Him that bought me with his blood,
Of these tidings know I none!
But, by these wordis, thinketh me
Away ye wolde that I were;
Now have good day, my lady free,
For, sooth, thou seest me never mair!"

With these words he rushed out of the queen's apartme hurried to his own; put on a suit of armour; mounted horse; and, galloping off at full speed, arrived in a f minutes within the forest; whilst his friends, who hear little too late the intelligence of his quarrel with the que were unable to prevent his hasty departure, and, after ineffectual pursuit, in which they tired their horses and the selves, returned full of indignation against the unfortun Guenever. Even Arthur himself, who, when he came fr hunting, was much disappointed and grieved at this sec loss of his bravest knight, would have been much disposed join in their resentment, but that he found his wife in a st of grief and despondency, which proved that she was alre too severely punished by the loss of Lancelot, for any inc creet language of which she might have been guilty.

But her misfortunes were not yet terminated. A cert squire who was in her immediate service, having some ca of dislike to Gawain, determined to destroy him by poison a public entertainment. For this purpose he conveyed poison into an apple of remarkable size, which he placed the top of several others, and put the dish before the que hoping that, as Gawain was the knight whom she esteen next to Sir Lancelot, she would make him the fatal pres But it happened otherwise. A Scottish knight of high tinction, happening to arrive on that day, was seated on side of the queen; and to him, as a stranger, she presen the apple; which he had no sooner tasted than he insta expired. The whole court was, of course, thrown into c fusion: the knights rose from table, darting looks of indig tio- retched Guenever, whose tears and exclamati to exculpate her from a crime apparently eacle and other antidotes were applied in v

and nothing remained but to order a magnificent funeral for the murdered stranger.

Knightis done none other might,
But buried him, with doel[1] enough,
At a chapel, with riche light,
In a forest by a swough.[2]
A riche tomb they did be-dight;[3]
A crafty clerk the letters drough,[4]
How there lay the Scottish knight
That queen Ganore with poison slough.[5]
After this a time befell,
To the court there com a knight,
His brother he was, as I you tell,
And Sir Mador for sooth he hight.[6]
He was a handy man, and snell,[7]
In tournament, and eke in fight.

Sir Mador was, at the time of his arrival, perfectly ignorant of his brother's death: but having accidentally seen the chapel while hunting in the forest, he entered it to say his prayers; and, being attracted by the magnificence of a newly-erected tomb, perused the fatal inscription, and hastily returned to court, determined on immediate and signal vengeance. He rode into the hall; loudly accused the queen of treason; and insisted on her being given up to punishment unless she should find, within an appointed time, a knight hardy enough to risk his life in support of her innocence, Arthur, powerful as he was, did not dare to deny the appeal, but was compelled, with a heavy heart, to ratify the conditions; and Mador sternly took his departure, leaving the royal couple plunged in no small terror and anxiety.

During all this time Sir Lancelot had taken up his abode with a hermit in the forest, and had begun to find his companion, however edifying, much less amusing than the beautiful mistress with whom he had so perversely quarrelled, when the news of Sir Mador's challenge fortunately reached his ears. He had hitherto lamented, to very little purpose, the violence of his own temper, and the jealousy of Guenever,

[1] Grief. [2] A bog, or mire. [3] Prepare. [4] Drew.
[5] Slew. [6] Was called. [7] Sharp; keen.

and had considered, as ardent lovers usually do, that a reconciliation was the most impossible thing in the world. But this intelligence revived his spirits, and he began to prepare with the utmost cheerfulness for a contest, which, if its issue should be successful, would insure him at once the affection of his mistress and the gratitude of his sovereign.

The suddenness of Sir Mador's accusation, as we have seen, had left to Arthur very little time for reflection; but on the following day he took Sir Gawain with him into a private apartment for the purpose of discussing all the circumstances of this strange and calamitous adventure. During their consultation, the habit of curiosity inherent in all knights frequently drew them to the window of their tower, the walls of which were washed by a river; and on this river they descried, with great surprise, a boat richly ornamented, and covered with an awning of cloth of gold, which appeared to be floating down the stream without any human guidance. The subject of their consultation was, for a while, forgotten in their anxiety to examine this wonderful boat, which fortunately drove to shore at the same instant. They descended, and entered it. Beneath the awning was a bed decked with princely magnificence; and on lifting up the clothes, they discovered the dead body of a beautiful woman, in whose features Gawain easily recognised the lovely maid of Ascalot. Pursuing their search, they discovered a purse richly embroidered with gold and jewels, and within the purse a letter; which Arthur opened, and found addressed to himself and to all the knights of the round table, stating that Lancelot du Lac, the most accomplished of knights, and most beautiful of men, but at the same time the most boorish and inflexible, had by his rigour produced the death of the wretched maiden, whose love was no less invincible than his cruelty. The king immediately gave orders for the interment of the lady with all the honours suited to her rank; at the same time explaining to the knights, whom he convened for the purpose of attending her funeral, the history of her affection for Lancelot, which rendered her a subject of common interest to them all. Gawain at the same time repaired to the queen, to apologize for having inadvertently conveyed to her a false impression of Lancelot's fidelity;

"Of Ascalot that maiden free
I said you she was his leman;[1]
That I so gabbed[2] it reweth me,
For all the sooth now tell I can.
He nolde[3] her nought, we mow well see;
Forthy,[4] dead is that white as swan;
This letter thereof warrant wol be:
She plaineth on Lancelot to each man."

Guenever became furious at this intelligence; she felt that all her present misfortunes were owing to her foolish quarrel with her lover,—a quarrel occasioned solely by the sarcastic remarks of Sir Gawain; whom therefore, without listening to his excuses, she drove contumeliously from her presence.[5]

But as the day appointed by Sir Mador was fast approaching, it became necessary that she should endeavour to procure a champion for her defence; and, conducted by Arthur, she successively adjured Sir Hector, Sir Lyonel, Sir Bohort, and even Sir Gawain, to undertake the battle. She fell on her knees before them; called heaven to witness her innocence of the crime alleged against her; but was sternly answered by all, that they could not undertake the battle, after having seen with their own eyes the sudden death of the knight whom she had manifestly poisoned; and that she, whose violence and injustice had driven from court the incomparable Sir Lancelot, did not deserve a defender. She retired, therefore, dejected and disconsolate; but the sight of the fatal pile, on which if found guilty she was doomed to be burned, exciting her to a fresh effort, she again repaired to Sir Bohort, threw herself at his feet, and, piteously crying on him for mercy, fell into a swoon. The brave knight was not proof against this appeal to his feelings; he raised her up, and hastily promised that he would undertake her cause, if no other or better champion should present himself. He then summoned his friends, and communicated to them his resolution; and as a martal combat with Sir Mador was a most fearful enterprise, they agreed to accompany him in the morning to the her-

[1] Mistress. [2] Talked lightly. [3] Ne would, would not. [4] Therefore.
[5] A leaf of the MS. is here torn out: but no part of the story appears to be missing; the lines which are wanting having been probably employed partly in Guenever's ejaculations, and partly in the author's description of the danger to which she was now exposed.

forest, where he proposed to receive absolution [illegible], and to make his peace with heaven before he [illegible].

As they came by the forest side
Their orisouns for to make,
The noblest knight then saw they ride
That was in earthly shape.
His loreine lemed[1] all with pride;
Steed and armure all was blake;
His name is nought to hele[2] and hide,
He hight Sir Launcelot du Lake.

[illegible] joyed at this meeting, they fell on their knees and [illegible] thanks to Providence; after which, having, in answer to Launcelot's questions, confirmed the news of the queen's [illegible] danger, they received his instructions to return to [illegible], to comfort her as well as they could,—but to conceal [illegible] intention of undertaking her defence, which he meant to [illegible] the character of an unknown adventurer.

On their return to the castle, they found that mass was [illegible], and had scarcely time to speak to the queen before [illegible] were summoned into the hall to dinner. A general [illegible] was spread over the countenances of all the guests; [illegible] himself was unable to conceal his dejection; and the [illegible] Guenever, motionless and bathed in tears, sat in [illegible] expectation of Sir Mador's appearance. Nor was it [illegible] he stalked into the hall, and, with a voice of thunder, rendered more impressive by the general silence, demanded instant justice on his victim; threatening that, if it were delayed, he would himself tear her from them and sacrifice her before their eyes. Arthur meekly answered, that little of the day was yet spent; that dinner was not over; and, that perhaps a champion might yet be found capable of satisfying his impatience for battle. Sir Bohort now rose from table, after casting a significant look on Sir Lyonel, and shortly re-entered in complete armour, resumed his place, after receiving the [illegible] thanks of Arthur, who now began to resume [illegible] confidence. But Sir Mador, growing every [illegible] impatient, again repeated his denunciations of [illegible] insisted that the combat should instantly take

[illegible] alone. [2] Conceal, Sax.

Then, as Sir Mador loudest spake,
The queen of treason to by-calle,[1]
Comys Sir Launcelot du Lake,
Ridand right into the hall.
His steed and armure all was blake,
His visere over his eyen falle;
Many a man began to quake;
A-dread of him nigh were they all.

Then spake the king, mickle of might,
That hende was in eche a sithe,[2]
"Sir, is it your will to light?
Eat and drink and make you blithe."
Launcelot spake as a strange knight,
"Nay, sir!" he said, "as swythe[3]
I herde tell here of a fight,
I come to save a lady's life.

"Evil hath the queen by-set her deeds,
That she hath worshiped many a knight,
And she hath no man, in her needs,
That for her life dare take a fight!
Thou, that her of treason gredes,[4]
Hastily that thou be dight!
Out of thy wits though that thou yede,[5]
To day shalt thou prove all thy might!"

Sir Mador, though somewhat surprised, was not appalled by the stern challenge and still more formidable appearance of his mighty antagonist, but instantly and cheerfully prepared for the encounter. At the first shock, both were unhorsed. They then drew their swords, and commenced a combat which lasted from noon to till evening; when Sir Mador, whose strength began fail, was at length felled to the ground by Sir Lancelot, and compelled to sue for mercy. The victor, whose arm was again raised to terminate the life of his opponent, instantly dropped his sword, courteously lifted up the fainting Sir Mador, and even condescended so far as to reveal his name, frankly confessing that he had never yet found an equally formidable enemy. The other, with similar courtesy, solemnly renounced all further projects of

[1] Accuse. [2] At all times. [3] As soon; *i. e.*, immediately.
[4] To cry, or proclaim. [5] Went.

vengeance for his brother's death; and the two knights, now become fast friends, embraced each other with the greatest cordiality. In the mean time Arthur, having recognised Sir Lancelot, whose helmet was now unlaced, rushed down into the lists, followed by all his knights, to welcome and thank his deliverer; Guenever swooned with joy; and the place of combat suddenly exhibited a scene of the most tumultuous delight. The general satisfaction was still further increased by the discovery of the real culprit, whose attempt to poison Sir Gawain had been productive of such extensive misery. Having accidentally incurred some suspicion, he confessed his crime, and was publicly punished in the presence of Sir Mador; who, seeing the queen so fully justified, became anxious to make her amends, by every service and attention in his power, for the injustice of his former accusation. The court now returned to the castle, which, with the title of "la joyeuse garde," bestowed on it perhaps in consequence of the festivities celebrated in honour of the queen's exculpation, was conferred on Sir Lancelot by Arthur, as a memorial of his gratitude.

The happiness and security of Guenever, and of her paramour, now appeared to be permanently established; but a plot was already laid, which was destined to destroy them, together with the king and kingdom. Though Gawain was warmly attached to Sir Lancelot, his brother Agravain had been, from the first, the envious and implacable enemy of that knight; and, having united himself with Modred, the king's nephew, who headed a considerable party at court, determined on preferring against the lovers an open accusation of treason. It was in vain that Gawain exerted all his eloquence to oppose a measure of which he foretold all the fatal consequences, and implored his brother to desist, on the ground of the long and sincere friendship which had subsisted between him and Lancelot. Agravain was inflexible; and Arthur having entered the hall and demanded the cause of this violent altercation, Sir Gawain retired with his brothers Gaheriet and Gueheres, that he might not become an accomplice in the action which he so strongly disapproved.

Arthur, who had hitherto been free from suspicion, was equally astonished and distressed at hearing that the champion of his throne was his worst enemy, and at reading in

the eyes of the whole assembly the truth and notoriety of the accusation. But however strongly he felt the wish, he was unable to devise the means of vengeance, which were thus suggested by Sir Agravain:

"Sir, ye, and all the court bydene,[1]
Wendeth tomorrow an-hunting right;
And sithen, send word to the queen,
That ye will dwell without all night.
And I, and other twelve knights keen,
Full privily we shall us dight;
We shall him have, withouten ween,[2]
Tomorrow, or any day be light."

This treacherous project was immediately carried into execution. Guenever, perfectly off her guard, sent the usual summons to Sir Lancelot; and the knight, though warned by Sir Bohort and other friends to beware of Agravain, could not refrain from accepting so pleasing an invitation; nor could he be persuaded to carry, to such a meeting, the apparently useless incumbrance of a shield and coat of mail. He, however, took his sword, which he concealed under his night-gown, and arrived, apparently undiscovered, at the queen's apartment: but scarcely was he locked in the embraces of his mistress, when he heard at the door the voices of Sir Agravain and Sir Modred; who loudly accusing him of treason, tauntingly added, that the means of escape were now effectually prevented. Guenever was half dead with apprehension; but Lancelot, finding his situation so desperate, started from the bed, enveloped his left arm in his gown, seized his sword in his right, suddenly set open the door; and, when one only of his adversaries had rushed in, as suddenly closed it. The armed knight advanced against him as to an easy victory, but at the first blow fell lifeless at his feet.

The knight that Launcelot has slain,
His armure found he fair and bright;
Hastily he hath them off drayne,[3]
And therein himselfe dight.
"Now know thou well, Sir Agrawayne,
Thou prisons me no more to-night!"

[1] Forthwith. [2] Without doubt. [3] Drawn.

Out then sprang he with mickle main,
Himself ayenst them all to fight.

The battle was now quickly decided. The treacherous Agravain was the first victim; his ten companions soon fell around him; and Sir Modred, escaping in time, ran off to the king with the news of the ill success which had attended their stratagem. Lancelot hastened to Sir Bohort, related his adventure, spent the remainder of the night in assembling and arming all his friends; and at daybreak put himself at their head, and marched into the forest, after leaving a certain number of spies to bring him intelligence of the measures which should be adopted during his absence.

Though Lancelot had thus escaped, the queen still remained in the king's power; and as her guilt was notorious, his council unanimously doomed her to the flames.

The fire then made they in the felde;
Therto they brought that lady free;
All that ever might weapon welde,
About her armed for to be.
Gawain, that stiff[1] was under shelde,
Gaheriet ne Gueheres ne would not see;
In their chamber they them held;
Of her they hadde grete pité.

The King Arthur, like ilke tide,
Gawain and Gueheres for-sent;
Their answers were, nought for to hide,
They nolde be of his assent;
Gawain would never be beside,
There any woman should be brent.[2]
Gaheriet and Gueheres, with little pride,
All unharmed thither they went.

Lancelot, as might be expected, having received timely intelligence of this event, determined to rescue his mistress; attacked the escort; carried her off, and put all his enemies to the sword. Unfortunately, Gawain's brothers, who had disdained to bear arms on such an occasion, and were consequently quite defenceless, were involved in the indiscriminate massacre.

At the news of this slaughter, the mind of Arthur was

[1] Strong. [2] Burnt.

equally agitated by the opposite sentiments of fury and consternation; while the unfortunate Gawain, who had hitherto been guided only by his compassion for the queen and friendship for Lancelot, now gave himself up to sentiments of deadly hatred and revenge against the authors of this outrage. Rushing into the room where his murdered brothers were deposited, he threw himself on their bodies, and solemnly swore that no peace or truce should ever take place between him and Lancelot, until that innocent blood should be expiated by the death of his enemy or by his own. In the mean time that enemy was scarcely more at his ease, being well acquainted with the noble and manly but implacable mind of Sir Gawain, whom he had irreparably though unintentionally injured, and therefore aware of the fatal consequences that must ensue. But the die was now cast. He retired to his strong castle of *la joyeuse garde*, and, dispatching messengers in all directions, soon collected a large and well-appointed army; while Arthur on his part sent to collect all his vassals, and prepared to shed the best blood of the country in the prosecution of this unfortunate and unnatural warfare.

Sir Lancelot, who, though perfectly confident in the strength of his troops, was still desirous of preventing the effusion of blood, determined to make a last effort for peace, and to dispatch a damsel to the royal camp, to declare "that the accusation of Agravain was false, and that he was ready to maintain this assertion against all who might gainsay it."

The maiden is ready for to ride,
In a full rich aparaylment,
Of samyte[1] green, with mickle pride,
That wrought us in the orient,[2]
A dwarf shall wende by her side;
Such was Launcelot's commaundement.
So were the manners in that tide,
When a maid on message went.

This embassy, however, was rejected with disdain; and the king, having collected all his forces, marched to the castle of *la joyeuse garde*, which he blockaded on all sides. The strength

[1] A rich silken stuff. [2] All dresses of extraordinary splendour and magnificence are represented in our romances as coming from the East.

of the walls and of the garrison precluded the possibility of an assault; but during seventeen weeks of useless siege, the king and Sir Gawain daily advanced to the walls, accusing Sir Lancelot of treason and cowardice, and defying him to a trial of strength in the field; whilst the knight calmly answered, that they would better show their wisdom by relinquishing a fruitless attempt, and by sparing the many brave men on both sides, who were perfectly uninterested in the quarrel. But Bohort and Lyonel were less tolerant than their commander, and at their entreaty he was at length brought to accept the often repeated challenge. A dreadful battle ensued, in which numbers were slain on both sides; and Sir Lionel was unhorsed and dangerously wounded by Gawain; while Lancelot, overthrowing all who opposed him, seemed to ride through the ranks for the sole purpose of separating the most obstinate combatants, and of stopping the general carnage.

The king was ever near beside,
And hewe on him with all his mayn,
And he so courteous was that tide,[1]
O[2] dint that he nolde smite again.

Bohort de Gannes saught at last,
And to the king then gan he ride;
And on his helm he hit so fast
That near he lost all his pride.
The stede's rigge under him brast,[3]
That he to ground fell that tide;
And sith then wordys loud he cast
With Sir Launcelot to chide.

"Sir, shaltow[4] all day suffer so
That the king shall thee assail?
And sith his herte is so thro,[5]
Thy courtesy may not avail?
Batailles shal there never be mo,
An thou wilt do by my counsail;
Giveth us leave them all to slo,
For thou hast vanquished this bataille!"

"Alas," quod Launcelot, "wo is me,
That ever should I see with sight,

[1] That time. [2] One. [3] The horse's back broke or burst under him.
[4] Shalt thou. [5] Eager, A. S.

equally agitated by the opposite sentiments of fury and consternation; while the unfortunate Gawain, who had hitherto been guided only by his compassion for the queen and friendship for Lancelot, now gave himself up to sentiments of deadly hatred and revenge against the authors of this outrage. Rushing into the room where his murdered brothers were deposited, he threw himself on their bodies, and solemnly swore that no peace or truce should ever take place between him and Lancelot, until that innocent blood should be expiated by the death of his enemy or by his own. In the mean time that enemy was scarcely more at his ease, being well acquainted with the noble and manly but implacable mind of Sir Gawain, whom he had irreparably though unintentionally injured, and therefore aware of the fatal consequences that must ensue. But the die was now cast. He retired to his strong castle of *la joyeuse garde*, and, dispatching messengers in all directions, soon collected a large and well-appointed army; while Arthur on his part sent to collect all his vassals, and prepared to shed the best blood of the country in the prosecution of this unfortunate and unnatural warfare.

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Of samyte white, with silver shredde,
Ivory saddle, and white stede;
Saumbues[1] of the same thredde,
That wrought was in the heathen thede,[2]
Launcelot her bridle ledde,
In the Romans as we rede.[3]

The other knights, everichone,
In samyte green of heathen land,
And their kirtles, ride alone;
And each knight a green garland;
Saddles set with rich stone;
Each one a branch of olive in hand.
All the field about hem shone;
The knightes rode full loud singand.

Sir Lancelot, having formally restored the queen, attempted to exculpate both her and himself; but Arthur, as might be supposed, was more offended than softened by such a justification.

Then bespake him Sir Gawain,
That was hardy knight and free,
"Launcelot, thou may it nought with-sayn,
That thou hast slain my brethren three!
Forthy, shall we prove our main,
In field, whether shall have the gree.[4]
Or[5] either of us shall other slayn,
Blithe shall I never be!"

Lancelot, having vainly urged in reply, that Agravain had fallen the victim of his own treachery, and that the other brothers had owed their death to an unfortunate accident, and by no means to his orders, again addressed himself to the king, and inquired whether he was now to consider all hopes of an accommodation as absolutely desperate? Arthur replied in the affirmative. He then asked, whether, on his promise to renounce immediately his English possessions, to retire into Britany, and never more to return, he might be assured of a safe conduct, and of being left in the tranquil possession of his foreign dominions; and was told that his departure.

[1] Saddle-cloths. [2] Land, nation, A. S. [3] The term *Roman* was applied to signify the French language, in which most of the old romances were originally written. [4] Degree; the prize. [5] Ere, until.

should be unmolested: but Gawain added, that he would do well to prepare all his means of defence, as the royal army was already assembling, and would speedily be embarked to attack him in his own territory.

Lancelot, after this unsuccessful conference, retired to his castle, assembled his most zealous friends; marched them to Caerleon, and embarked for Britany, where he was received with enthusiasm by his long-neglected subjects. He began by rewarding the services of those who had constantly followed his fortunes; he invested Sir Bohort with the kingdom of Gannes; bestowed on Lyonel the crown of France, formerly called Gaul; on Hector des Marais the sovereignty of his own dominions; and divided amongst his other friends the whole of the lands at his disposal, reserving to himself little more than the strong city and castle of Benwick, which he plentifully supplied with provisions, and secured by a select and numerous garrison.

In the mean time King Arthur, fully aware of the importance and danger of the enterprise which he was about to undertake, convened his council, and represented to them the necessity of choosing a viceroy to govern his dominions during his absence; and the unanimous choice of his barons having fallen on his nephew Modred, he willingly confirmed their nomination, marshalled his army, and embarked in pursuit of his enemy. After a prosperous voyage he landed on the coast of Britany; wasted the country during his progress with fire and sword; and, learning that Sir Lancelot had shut himself up in his capital, finally encamped his army at a short distance from the city.

Lancelot now called a council of war to deliberate on his future operations. Sir Bohort, Sir Galahad, and Sir Brademagus advised an immediate attack on the enemy in the open field; Sir Lyonel recommended a defensive war; and Lancelot himself not only supported the latter opinion, but even proposed to send a new embassy to Arthur, with such proposals as he could not, in common justice, venture to reject.

The maid was full sheen[1] to shew,
Upon her steed when she was set;
Her paryl[2] all of one hue,
Of a green velvet;

[1] Beautiful. [2] Apparel.

In her hand a branch new,
For why that no man should her let;
Thereby men messengers knew,
In ostes[1] when that men them met.

The king was locked in a field
By a river broad and dreghe[2];
A while she hoved[3] and beheld;
Pavilyons were pight[4] on high;
She saw there many comely teld,[5]
With pommelles[6] bright as goldis beghe;[7]
On one hyng[8] the kingis shield;
That pavyloun she drew her nigh.

Being accosted by Sir Lucan the boteler,[9] she was introduced into the great hall of the royal tent, where Arthur was seated with Sir Gawain, and falling on her knees delivered her credentials. She then explained, verbally, the terms which she was ordered to propose, viz. "that a truce should be concluded for twelve months, during which the contending parties should arrange the conditions of a definitive peace; on the conclusion of which, Lancelot promised to repair to the Holy Land, and to pass the remainder of his days in acts of devotion."

Arthur summoned all his barons to deliberate on these proposals, which he was personally desirous of accepting, and which they unanimously concurred in approving; but the implacable Sir Gawain sternly declared, that, "whilst the blood of his brethren was unatoned, he was determined to listen to no accommodation: that, if the king thought fit to retire, he would singly prosecute the quarrel, with the aid of such friends as might be induced to follow him; but, that the king would do well to recollect that the cause in which Agravain had fallen a sacrifice was personal to his majesty; and that the other brothers had been murdered in consequence of their obedience to the royal mandate, on an occasion which they utterly disapproved." Arthur could not withstand these arguments. The messenger was dismissed; the proposals rejected; and both parties prepared for a war of extermination

[1] Armies. [2] Long. [3] Waited. [4] Pitched. [5] Erected. [6] Balls or knobs. Crown, Sax. [8] Hung. [9] Butler.

Gawain was perfectly aware that nothing was to be hoped from an assault, and that the city, if reducible at all, could only be taken by famine; but, at least, he could gratify his resentment by daily insulting his enemy: and so grating were these insults, that, though they could not overcome the patience of Sir Lancelot, they daily brought forward the boldest of his champions. These successively engaged in single combat with their pertinacious and provoking assailant, and were successively overthrown, and many of them grievously wounded, by the superiority of his skill and strength; whilst such were his *grace* and good fortune, that during six months he constantly escaped unhurt from these encounters. But his soul thirsted for the blood of Sir Lancelot; and this patient adversary was at length compelled in honour to accept the challenge.

The lord that great was of honour,
Himself, Sir Launcelot du Lake,
Above the gates, upon the tower,
Comely to the king he spake:
" My lord, God save your honour!
Me is woe now, for your sake,
Against thy kin to stand in stour[1]:
But needs I must this battle take."

We have already seen that Sir Gawain, though always sufficiently formidable, possessed, by the benediction of heaven, the peculiar privilege of becoming doubly strong from *undertime* (nine o'clock in the morning) till noon; and of this peculiarity Sir Lancelot was well aware. He therefore exerted his utmost skill in parrying the blows of his adversary, till he was compelled, by a necessary regard for his own safety, to seize an advantage offered by Gawain's inconsiderate fury, and to employ his whole strength in a blow which terminated the contest.

Through the helm, into the heved,
Was hardy Gawain wounded so,
That unnethe[2] was him life leaved;
On foot might he no farther go.
But wightly his sword about he waved,
For ever he was both keen and thro[3].

[1] Conflict; battle. [2] Scarcely. [3] Eager.

Launcelot then him lyand leaved,
For all the world he nolde him slo.

Launcelot then drew on dryhe,[1]
His sword was in his hand drawn;
And Sir Gawain loud gan cry,
"Traitour and coward, come again!
When I am whole, and going on hie,
Then will I prove, with might and main;
An yet, an thou wouldest nigh me nigh,
Thou shalt well wete I am not slain!"

"Gawain, while thou might stiffly stand,
Many a stroke of thee I stood;
And I forbare thee, in every land,
For love, and for the kingis blood.
When thou art whole, in heart and hand,
I rede[2] thee, turn and change thy mood!
While I am Launcelot, and man livand,
God shielde me from workes wode![3]

"But have good day, my lord the king,
And your doughty knightes all!
Wendeth home, and leave your warring;
Ye win no worship at this wall!
An I would my knights out bring,
I wot full sore rue it ye shall;
My lord, therefore think on such thing,
How fele folk therefore might fall."

With these words, Lancelot calmly retired into the city; while Gawain was conveyed to his tent, and consigned to the care of the king's physicians.

The wound was so severe, that during the first fortnight his recovery was very doubtful: at length, however, he was restored to health, and with it to his implacable desire of vengeance. A second time he forced Lancelot into the field, and a second time, after a long and doubtful conflict, was brought to the ground by his gallant enemy, whom he vainly tried to provoke by reiterated menaces and insults to follow up his blow, and to rid him of a life which was solely devoted to one fatal purpose. The sword had accidentally struck him

[1] Back; at a distance. [2] Counsel. [3] Mad works.

on the place of his former wound. His pain was greater, and his recovery slower than before; and he was still unable to carry arms,—when an unexpected piece of intelligence compelled Arthur to abandon his enterprise against Sir Lancelot, and to return with all speed to England.

That false traitour Sir Modred,
(The kinge's foster-son he wes,
And eke his own son, as I read,
Therefore men him for steward ches.[1])
So falsely hath he England led,
Wete you well, withouten lese,
His emeis[2] wife would he wed:
That many a man rued that rese.

As there was at that time little regular communication between distant countries, and as no event of sufficient importance to require the dispatch of a special messenger had occurred at the siege of Benwick, Modred, who had tasted the sweets of power, and was in possession of the royal treasury, determined to spread a report of his uncle's death; and, having succeeded in this artifice, summoned an assembly of the principal lords, and obtained from them his own election to the throne. During the festival of his coronation, which took place at Canterbury, he contrived to purchase a number of partisans to his cause, whom he dispatched to the coast with orders to levy troops, and, in the event of Arthur's return, to oppose force by force. He next proceeded to Winchester, where he procured such a number of adherents, that, finding his power solidly established, he resolved on marrying Guenever, whose beauty, it seems, was still a necessary ornament to the court of a British sovereign. But the artful queen, having obtained a fortnight's respite, under pretence of arraying herself with greater magnificence at the approaching wedding, made her escape to London, and, shutting herself up in the Tower with a strong garrison of her friends, had the courage to set at defiance the utmost efforts of the usurper.

As Modred was by no means disposed to relinquish his purpose, but lost no time in besieging his intended bride, the archbishop of Canterbury now thought it his duty to inter-

[1] Chose; selected. [2] Uncle's.

fere, and marching in a solemn procession, preceded by the crucifix, towards the Tower, made an excellent harangue to the new king, reproaching him with his incestuous intentions. Unfortunately, however, the object of this advice had very little respect for the church.

"Ah! nice[1] clerk!" said Modred, "then,
Trowest thou to warn me of my will?
By Him that for us suffered pain,
These wordes shalt thou like full ill!
With wild horse thou shalt be drayn,
And hanged high upon a hill!"
The bishop to flee then was fain,
And suffered him his follies to fulfill.
Then he him cursed with book and bell
At Canterbury far in Kent;
Soon when Modred heard thereof tell,
To seek the bishop hath he sent.
The bishop durst no longer dwell;
But gold and silver hath he hent;[2]
There was no longer for to spell,
But to a wilderness he is went.

Luckily for Guenever, the strength of the Tower rendered her more essential service than the imprecations of the poor archbishop; and her persecutor was compelled to relinquish his siege, for the purpose of taking the necessary precautions against his uncle's invasion.

In fact, Arthur had used all possible expedition. He shortly arrived with his fleet off Dover, where he beheld with astonishment a large army of his former subjects prepared to oppose his landing; and no sooner had he reached the shore, than his galleys were attacked with such impetuosity that he lost many of his best troops before he could effect their disembarkation. Amongst the slain was the "good Gawain," who, though "sick and sore unsound," so as to be unable to bear the pressure of his helmet, had called for his armour, and, encountering the first rage of the assailants, had been killed by a blow on the head at the beginning of the conflict. Arthur, however, ignorant of his nephew's fate, succeeded in his attack, made a great slaughter of the enemy, and pursued

[1] Foolish. [2] Caught; collected in haste.

them till night on the road to Canterbury, where Modred was posted with the main body of his army. On the next morning the rebels boldly advanced to meet him, and the hostile armies encountered on Barren-down,[1] where, after a bloody and decisive battle, Arthur was again victorious. Here, while occupied in burying the dead, whose barrows (as our author assures us) are still visible, he first learnt the fate of the illustrious Gawain, whose body he caused to be removed from the galley where it lay, and to be interred with all possible pomp "in a chapell amyd the quire" in the cathedral of Canterbury; after which, finding that Modred had retreated into Wales, he proceeded to the westward as far as Salisbury, whence he issued his orders for assembling a fresh army, whom he appointed to join him at Whitsuntide, and then, continuing his march, advanced still further into the West, where Modred had collected a large body of forces, and was again ready to meet him in the field. It was determined by mutual consent that this important battle should take place immediately after the feast of the Trinity; and Arthur, relying on the well-tried valour of his veterans, though much inferior in point of numbers, fondly anticipated the immediate destruction of his rival, and his own restoration to the undisputed sovereignty of Britain.

But on the eve of the intended battle he had a dreadful *sweven* (dream); and as the dreams of Arthur were often more to the purpose than his waking thoughts, the reader will be pleased to see this in the words of the original.

At night, when Arthur was brought in bed,
(He should have battle upon the morrow)
In strong swevens he was be-sted,
That many a man that day should have sorrow.
Him thought he sat, in gold all gled,[2]
As he was comely king with crown,
Upon a wheel that full wide spread,
And all his knightis to him boun.[3]

The wheel was ferly[4] rich and round,
In world was never none half so high;

[1] Barham Down, near Canterbury. It is still covered with Saxon barrows, many of which have been opened, and show that it was a Saxon cemetery; but there is no reason for supposing it the result of a battle-field. [2] Shining; brilliant. [3] Ready, obedient. [4] Wonderfully.

Thereon he sat, richly crowned,
With many a besaunt, broche, and beye.[1]
He looked down upon the ground,
A black water under him he seye;
With dragons fele there lay unbound,
That no man durst them nighe nigh.

He was wonder feared to fall
Among the fiendes there that fought;
The wheel overturned there withall,
And everych by a limb him caught.
The king gan loud cry and call,
As marred man of wit unsaught.[2]
His chamberlains waked him there withall,
And wodely[3] out of his sleep him brought.

All night gan he wake and weep,
With dreary heart and sorrowful steven;[4]
And against day he fell on sleep;
About him was set tapers seven.
Him thought Sir Gawain him did keep,
With mo folk than men can neven;[5]
And a river that was broad and deep;
All seemed angels come from heaven.

The king was never yet so fain,
His foster-son when that he see;
"Welcome," he said, "Sir Gawain!
An thou might live, well were me!
Now, leve friend, withouten layn,[6]
What are tho folk that follow thee?"
"Certes, sir," he said again,
"They bide in bliss, there I mot be.

"Lordes they were, and ladies hend,
This worldis life that han forlorn;
While I was man on life to lend,
Against their foen I fought them forn.[7]
Now find I them my moste friend,
They bless the time that I was born;
They asked leave with me to wend,
To meet with you upon this morn.

[1] Coin, buckle, and ornament. [2] At strife. [3] Madly. [4] Voice, A. S. [5] Name. [6] Concealment. [7] For.

" A month-day of truce must ye take,
And then to battle be ye bayn;[1]
You cometh to help Launcelot du Lake,
With many a man mickle of main.
To-morrow the battle ye must forsake,
Or else, certes, ye shall be slain."
The king gan wofully weep and wake,
And said, " Alas! this rueful rayn!"[2]

Arthur, on waking, did not fail to communicate to his council the supernatural intelligence and advice which he had just received; and they all concurred in the propriety of postponing the battle, if it should be possible to obtain the consent of Modred for the purpose.

Sir Lucan, the butler, was appointed to conduct this negotiation, and repaired, with a hundred knights as his attendants, and with a competent number of bishops as his advisers, to the camp of Modred, whom they found, in the first instance, extremely brutal and untractable, but whom they ultimately induced not only to accept of a truce, but even to relinquish the sovereignty of the island, on condition of being invested with an independent and despotic government over the two countries of Kent and Cornwall, with the further assurance of succeeding to the throne after the old king's death. But he also insisted that Arthur should ratify this treaty in his presence, and before twenty-eight knights as witnesses, fourteen of whom should attend each of the contracting parties, and set their hands to the convention in the sight of both armies. Arthur readily acquiesced in these conditions; and the rival chiefs, having selected the stipulated number of attendants, advanced to the place of meeting, which was a small eminence at an equal distance from both camps. But each distrusted the sincerity of the other. They, therefore, after marshalling their respective armies, separately gave orders, that if on either side a sword should be drawn, the trumpets should instantly sound the charge, and the troops advance to the attack without further inquiry.

The terms of the treaty were mutually accepted, and the accommodation nearly concluded, when an adder gliding from beneath a thorn-bush suddenly stung one of the knights; who,

[1] Ready. [2] Cry, sound.

feeling himself wounded, drew his sword to destroy the reptile, and thus inconsiderately gave the signal for battle. Both armies had been equally desirous of peace, and both were incensed to madness by a supposed act of treachery which each imputed to the other. The conflict, thus urged on by individual hatred, could only terminate in their mutual destruction; and, at the close of this dreadful day, Arthur found himself supported by two knights only, Sir Lucan and Sir Bedwer, both of whom were grievously wounded; and Sir Modred stood quite alone, surrounded by a confused heap of slaughtered friends and enemies. The old king, losing all recollection of his dream at the sight of his nefarious rival, seized a spear, rushed against him, and pierced him through the body; but Modred at the same instant raising his sword struck him on the helmet with such convulsive strength, that the weapon inflicted a mortal wound, and Arthur sunk in a swoon to the earth. When recovered from this fit, he was conveyed to an adjoining hermitage; but the appearance of a number of peasants from the neighbouring country, who were employed on the field of battle in stripping the dead, led his friends to recommend a second removal. Sir Lucan, however, on attempting to take the monarch on his back, suddenly expired; upon which, Arthur giving up all hope of a further progress, called to Sir Bedwer, and, delivering to him his good sword Escalibore, adjured him to throw it into the sea, and to bring him back an account of the tokens which he should observe in consequence of this action. Sir Bedwer accepted the commission, but, tempted by the beauty and excellence of the sword, concealed it under a tree, and returned to the king, to whose question respecting what supernatural appearances he had noticed, he was obliged to answer, that he had seen nothing "but waters deep and waves wan." Though severely reproached by the king for his treachery, and strictly enjoined to obey the command which he had received, he returned a second time with an equally unsatisfactory answer, after having thrown the scabbard only into the water; but the indignation and menaces of Arthur, after this second instance of deceit, determined him to return for the third time and to execute his orders.

Sir Bedwer saw that bote was best,
And to the goode sword he went;

Into the sea full far he it kest;[1]
Then might he see what that it meant.
There came an hand, withouten rest,
Out of the water, and fair it hent;
And brandished, as it should brast,[2]
And sithe, as gleme[3] away it glent.[4]

To the king again went he there,
And said, "Lief sir, I saw a hand;
Out of the water it come all bare,
And thrice brandished that rich brand."
"Help me! soon were I thore!"
He led his lord unto the strand;
A rich ship, with masts and oar,
Full of ladies there they fand.[5]

The ladies, that were fair and free,
Courteously the king gan they fong;
And one, that brightest was of blee,[6]
Weeped sore, and handes wrung.
"Brother," she said, "wo is me;
From leeching hast thou been too long:
I wot that greatly grieveth me,
For thy painis are full strong!"

Sir Bedwer, thus separated from his master, of whom he learnt at parting that he was going to the isle of Avalon, in hopes of finding a remedy for his wounds, continued to wander through the forest till near day-break, when an unusually brilliant light directed his steps to a small chapel adjoining to a hermitage. This was the retreat of the pious archbishop who had been persecuted by Modred. He was on his knees before a newly-erected tomb of gray marble, on the top of which was laid an empty bier surrounded by a hundred wax torches. Sir Bedwer, when the good man had finished his devotions, inquired who was buried in that tomb, on which he observed an inscription in golden characters; when the hermit replied, that he had not hitherto attended to that circumstance, his curiosity having been suspended by his anxiety to fulfil the sacred duties recommended to him. How the tomb had been suddenly constructed he knew not; but, about midnight the bier had been brought by a company of ladies,

[1] Cast. [2] Burst. [3] Lightning. [4] Glided. [5] Found. [6] Complexion.

who, with their own hands, had buried the body which it supported, had left an offering of immense value, and had directed him to pray incessantly for the soul of the deceased. Sir Bedwer now examined the inscription, and, finding that the dead body was that of Arthur, requested leave to share the pious office with the good bishop; from whom, after making himself known, he readily obtained an admission into the holy order of which the prelate had lately taken the habit.

In the mean time Queen Guenever, who, as we have seen, had found an asylum in the Tower, having learned the fatal effects of the war, retired to a nunnery at Ambresbury, where she took the veil, together with five of her favourite attendants. Such was the state of things when Sir Lancelot, who, on first hearing the tidings of Modred's rebellion, had determined to assist the king with all his forces, arrived with a large fleet at Dover.

The first information which he received on landing was sufficient to convince him that he had come too late for most of his purposes. The death of Sir Gawain, the battle of Barren-down, and the subsequent destruction of the royal and rebel armies, were certain: but of the queen it was only known that she had quitted the Tower; the place of her retreat, and the motives of it, were not ascertained. She might perhaps still want his assistance: at all events, it was necessary that he should learn her wishes and intentions, to which his own were always subordinate. He therefore resolved to depart alone in quest of Guenever; and, having summoned his brother Hector, and his cousins Bohort and Lyonel, directed them to wait for his return for fifteen days; after which, they might dispose of the army as they should judge most expedient.

Accident led him to the very spot which contained the mistress of his heart. Almost extenuated with fatigue and hunger, he entered the cloister at Ambresbury in search of food, and was instantly recognised by Guenever, who fell down in a swoon on his appearance. When recovered by the care of the abbess and of the nuns, who hastened to her assistance, and were followed by the knight, she pointed him out as the person whose fatal affection for her had eventually produced all the miseries by which the country was afflicted. She then addressed herself to Lancelot, and adjured him instantly to

quit her presence, lest he should retard the arrival of that tranquil state of mind which she hoped by the grace of God to acquire, and which might enable her, by a faithful discharge of the severe duties now imposed on her, to make her peace with Heaven, and to expiate the enormous transgressions of her former life. By returning to his own country, by protecting his subjects from foreign war and from domestic tyranny, by transferring to a wife those vows from which she willingly released him, he might yet expect many years of happiness founded on virtue and innocence; and to this happiness, if the prayers of a sincere penitent were of any avail, she yet hoped to contribute. Lancelot replied that their guilt, whatever was its extent, had been mutual, and must require from both the same expiation; that his decision was therefore involved in hers; and that, after bidding her an eternal farewell, he should immediately repair to some hermitage, and pass the remnant of his days in fasting and in prayer. He then, as a last favour, requested a parting kiss; which she very wisely withheld, bestowing on him in its stead a moral admonition, which was much more likely to confirm him in his pious resolution.

Still pursuing his journey in the same direction, he arrived at an extensive forest, through which he wandered without a determinate object, till the sound of a chapel-bell at last directed him to the same hermitage which already contained Sir Bedwer and the archbishop. Here, after listening to a circumstantial account of Arthur's death, he received absolution from the holy prelate, and was solemnly invested with the monastic habit; and a very few weeks elapsed before the pious congregation was increased by the addition of Sir Bohort and four of his companions, who, when the fleet was sent back to Britany, had set off in quest of their commander. Sir Lyonel, with fifty knights, who had undertaken the same quest, had been treacherously murdered on their passage through London. Sir Hector, having also departed in search of his brother, took the northern road, and long wandered over the country to no purpose.

During seven years, Sir Lancelot, who after a proper noviciate was ordained to the priesthood, distinguished himself by a life of the most active and exemplary piety; but at length

It fell, against an even-tide,
That Launcelot sickened sely sare:[1]
The bishop he cleped[2] to his side,
And all his fellows less and mare.
He said, "Brethren, I may no longer abide;
My baleful[3] blood of life is bare;
What boot[4] is it to hele[5] and hide?
My foul flesh will to earth fare![6]

"But, brethren, I pray you to-night,
To-morrow, when ye find me dead,
Upon a bier that ye will me dight,[7]
And to Joyous-garde then me lead.
For the love of God Allmight,
Bury my body in that stead:
Some time my troth therto I plight;
Alas! me for-thinketh[8] that I so did!"

"Mercy, sir," they said all three,
"For His love that died on rood,
Giff any evil have grieved thee,
It is but heaviness of your blood!
To-morrow ye shall better be!
When were ye but of comfort good?"
Merrily spake all men but he,
But straight unto his bed he yode,[9]
And cleped the bishop him until,
And shrove him of his sins clean, &c.

The holy brethren then retired to their repose, but were wakened before day by strange shouts of exultation uttered by the sleeping bishop, who, being with difficulty recovered from his slumber, assured the brethren that he had seen the soul of Lancelot ascending to heaven under an escort of "thirty thousand and seven angels." The astonished and somewhat incredulous hearers, having lighted a candle, approached the bed of the knight; and, finding him quite stiff and cold, no longer doubted the truth of the vision.

After five days employed in watching the body, and in reciting the service for the dead, they proceeded to execute the last commands of their friend, and conveying him on a

[1] Very or wretchedly sorely. [2] Called. [3] Evil. [4] Help; advantage. [5] Conceal. [6] Go. [7] Prepare. [8] Repents. [9] Went.

bier, arrived after a fortnight's march at la Joyeuse Garde. Here they interred him with due solemnity; and here Sir Hector, after his tedious quest, had the good fortune to assist in praying for the soul of his brother, after whose example he renounced the profession of arms, and assumed the monastic habit. On their return, they stopped at the convent of Ambresbury, where they learnt that Guenever had died within a few days of Sir Lancelot; they therefore took charge of the body, which they deposited by the side of Arthur in the chapel of their hermitage, which, receiving successive additions of holy men, gradually grew up into the flourishing and celebrated monastery of Glastonbury.

The lamentations which attended these melancholy events being, in the metrical copy, rather insipid, have been omitted in our extract, which we shall close by the speech of Sir Bohort, as given in Malory's prose compilation. "And now I dare say—that, Sir Lancelot, ther thou lyest, thou were never matched of none earthly knight's hands. And thou were the curteist knight that ever bare shielde. And thou were the truest freende to thy lover that ever bestrode horse; and thou were the truest lover, of a synful man, that ever loved woman. And thou were the kindest man that ever stroke with swerde. And thou were the goodliest person that ever came amonge prece (crowd) of knyghtes. And thou were the meekest man and the gentillest that ever eate in hal among ladies. And thou were the sternest knight to thy mortall foe that ever put spere in the rest!"[1]

[1] There is a very curious and valuable alliterative romance under the same title as the present, and detailing the last scenes of the eventful life of King Arthur at very great length. It is preserved in a MS. in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, and extends to several thousand lines. This romance has been published by Mr. Halliwell, 4to, 1847.

INTRODUCTION TO GUY OF WARWICK.

THIS work, with the title of "The book of the most victorious prince Guy Earl of Warwick," was printed by William Copland, without a date, but, as Ritson tells us, before 1567; and reprinted, according to the same author, before 1571. Where the latter edition exists I know not; of the former there is a copy, but very imperfect, in Garrick's collection, and a second, which is perfect, in the library of the Duke of Roxburgh,[1] who purchased it at the sale of the late Mr. Steevens. The printed work, however, is extremely rare, having been superseded by a modern abridgment in prose, or rather perhaps in blank verse printed like prose, which is to be found at almost every stall in the metropolis.

A most beautiful and perfect MS. of this poem is preserved in the library of Caius college, Cambridge, and another in the Public Library Ff. ii. 38; but the most curious and ancient are two fragments contained in the Auchinleck MS. at Edinburgh, of which I have availed myself, as far as possible, in the following abstract.[2]

Guy of Warwick is certainly one of the most ancient and popular, and no less certainly one of the dullest and most tedious of our early romances; besides which, Mr. Ritson has taken some pains to prove that no hero of this name is to be found in real history. It will perhaps be thought indifferent whether such exploits as are related of Sir Guy be attributed to Julius Cæsar or to Jack the Giantkiller; but it seemed natural to class this and the following tale as Saxon, because they may possibly be founded on some Saxon tradition, and cannot be reduced to any other classification.

The name of our hero is undoubtedly French; and the only Saxon name to which it has any resemblance is that of Egils, who did in fact contribute very materially to the important victory gained by Athelstan over the Danes and their allies

[1] It was purchased at the Roxburgh sale by Mr. Heber, for £43 1s., and sold at Heber's sale in 1834, for £25. There is also an edition without date, printed by John Cawood.

[2] Printed by the Abbotsford Club, 4to, 1840.

at Brunanburgh; and it is not impossible that this warlike foreigner, becoming the hero of one of the many odes composed on the occasion of that much celebrated battle, may have been transformed, by some Norman monk, into the pious and amorous Guy of Warwick.[1]

Be this as it may, the tale, in its present state, has the appearance of being composed from the materials of at least two or three, if not more, romances. The first is a most tiresome love-story, which, it may be presumed, originally ended with the marriage of the fond couple; to this, it should seem, was afterwards tacked on a series of fresh adventures invented or compiled by some pilgrim from the Holy Land; and the hero of this legend was then brought home for the defence of Athelstan, and the destruction of Colbrand. Sir Heraud of Ardenne, we know, is the hero of a separate romance; and so is Sir Rayburn; yet it is certain that the dull and heavy compilation which the reader is about to encounter was written, in French at least, as early as the thirteenth century, and translated in the beginning of the fourteenth: so that Warton is evidently mistaken in supposing that it was partly copied from the Gesta Romanorum, which, by his own admission, was composed at a much later date.

Sir Guy is quoted by Chaucer as one of the *romances of price;* but the hero of Warwick has a much warmer panegyrist in one of our early historians, whose words are quoted in the note below, and who has introduced an apparently exact translation of the romance into the very exordium of his history.[2]

Perhaps it may be necessary to apologize for the length of the extract from the romance of "Guy and Colbrand," written in twelve-line stanzas, and contained in the Auchinleck MS. But the editor saw, or thought he saw, in that performance a degree of spirit and animation which formed a striking contrast with the usual monotony of the minstrel compositions.

[1] The original romance is in Anglo-Norman, and its history was given at length in a paper by Mr. Wright, read at the British Archæological Association, 1847.

[2] Sed quia historia dicti Guidonis cunctis seculis laudabili memoria commendanda est, in præsenti historia immiscere curavi, &c. Hen. de Knyghton ap. Hist. Ang. Scriptores x. p. 2321.

GUY OF WARWICK.

ROHAND was one of the most powerful nobles in England; uniting in his own person the earldoms of Warwick, of Oxford, and of Rockingham. He was brave, wise, and liberal. He had an only daughter, named Felice, whose numerous perfections are thus described:

Gentil she was, and as demure
As ger-fauk,[1] or falcon to lure,
That out of mew were y-drawe.[2]
So fair was none, in sooth sawe![3]
She was thereto courteous, and free, and wise,
And in the seven arts learned withouten miss.
Her masters were thither come
Out of Thoulouse, all and some.[4]
White and hoar all they were;
Busy they were that maiden to lere.[5]
And they her lered of astronomy,
Of ars-metrick,[6] and of geometry;
Of sophistry she was also witty;
Of rhetorick, and of other clergy.
Learned she was in musick:
Of clergy[7] was her none like.

It will immediately occur to the reader that, if it be no longer usual to compare the modest and unassuming demeanour of a virgin to the demureness of a bird of prey, this may possibly arise from our being less familiar than our ancestors were with the moral habits of ger-falcons. But, as it is not obviously requisite that a young countess should become an astronomer, a geometrician, and a sophist, it may not be impertinent to observe, that a knowledge of all the liberal arts was considered as essential to a proficiency in medicine (an attainment absolutely necessary to all ladies in the times of chivalry); and that the medical professors of Thoulouse, as

[1] A kind of large falcon. [2] Drawn. [3] In truthful speech. [4] *All and some*, i.e. every one. [5] To teach. [6] Arithmetic. [7] Science; learning.

well as those of Spain, owed much of their celebrity to their various attainments in science.

Perhaps astronomy, or rather astrology, might be of use, by enabling the practitioner to foretel the effect of medicines, which owed much of their virtue to the benignant influence of the stars; and this science supposes some acquaintance with arithmetic and geometry. As to sophistry (i. e. logic), rhetoric, and the *other clergy*, it is at least probable that they might do no harm.

While this extraordinary union of beauty and science in the person of a wealthy heiress, gave unusual splendour to the court of Rohand, the foundations of his power were solidly established by the martial virtues of his knights, and, above all, by the abilities and inflexible integrity of Segard of Wallingford, his steward and counsellor. The proudest barons of the land respected the laws of the Earl of Warwick, enforced as they were by the virtuous Segard, who punished every insulter of his patron's authority,

> And with strength him nim[1] wolde,
> Though he to Scotland sue[2] him sholde.
> Though a man bare an hundred pound,
> Upon him of gold so round,
> There nas man in all this land,
> That durst him do shame no schonde.[3]

Segard had a son named Guy, who, having been educated among the pages of the Earl of Warwick, was raised to the honour of being his principal cupbearer, and who soon increased, by his own merit, the favour and popularity for which he was originally indebted to his father's services. Segard had inspired him with the warmest zeal for the interests of his master; nature had given him a beautiful person, uncommon strength and activity, and undaunted courage; a foster-father (preceptor) perfectly versed in all the exercises of chivalry, the celebrated Héraud of Ardenne, had taught him the mysteries

> Of wood and river, and other game—
> ——— of hawke and hounde,
> Of estrich-falcons[4] of great mounde;[5]

[1] Take. [2] Follow. [3] Dishonour. [4] Probably the largest falcons, such as were capable of destroying the ostrich. [5] Size.

which, added to grace and address at "bordis," (tables), at tournaments, and at chess, formed all the necessary qualifications of a hero.

Such was the state of Rohand's court when he was called upon to celebrate, according to annual custom, the feast of Pentecost.

This splendid ceremony, which drew together all the nobility of the country, began by the celebration of high mass, which was followed by a sumptuous banquet, to which again succeeded the amusements of the chase, or of dancing. The following days (for the great festivals of the year generally occupied a whole fortnight) were marked by justs, and tournaments, and other warlike diversions, as well as by hawking and hunting; each day, however, being ushered in by ecclesiastical solemnities, and followed by the pleasures of the table. On these occasions, says our minstrel,

Everich maiden chose her love,
Everich knight his lemman[1]
Of the gentil maiden wimman.

Guy had taken his station near the Earl, when he received his orders to repair to the apartment of Felice, and to superintend the service of the ladies during dinner. With this order he readily complied; and, being clad in a silken kirtle which showed to the greatest advantage the symmetry of his form, acquitted himself of his office with so much grace and address, as to captivate the affections of all the beauties who beheld him, and even to attract the notice of Felice herself. On his presenting her the water to wash, greeting her at the same time on the part of her father, she could not forbear from asking his name, nor from expressing her satisfaction at the sight of a youth who was already known to her by reputation. Guy, gazing on his beautiful mistress, whom he now saw for the first time, almost forgot to answer the encomiums she paid him, and was utterly inattentive to the amorous glances of the thirty ladies by whom he was surrounded.

When it became necessary to take his leave, he hastened to his own chamber to give way to his new sensations; and, perceiving that his affections were unalterably fixed on an object which he supposed it utterly impossible to attain, gave himself up to despair. That respect for his lord which

[1] Mistress. See Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 513.

Segard had so carefully instilled into him, forced him to suffer in silence, though it was not sufficient to repress the presumptuous wishes he had formed. The distance between a vassal and his suzerain was such, that immediate death, attended with every circumstance of ignominy, might probably succeed the avowal of his passion. He therefore struggled with it till the conclusion of the festival; when, incapable of subduing a sensation which gradually undermined his health and strength, he determined to declare himself to his mistress, and to receive his final sentence at her hands.

Felice having returned an answer full of disdain, the unfortunate Guy retired to his chamber, determined to make no further efforts for the preservation of a life which he considered as no longer of any value. At the end of seven days and seven nights his disease had increased to such an alarming extent, that the whole court were thrown into consternation; and Earl Rohand, by whom he was tenderly loved, dispatched to him his most learned leeches (physicians), with orders to spare no pains for his recovery.

> Clerkes ben to him y-go;[1]
> Guy they find black and blo:[2]
> They asked him where his evil stode?

But Guy's answers being, as might be expected, enigmatical, the leeches were utterly unable to alleviate a complaint with whose nature and origin they were perfectly unacquainted, though they agreed in prognosticating that its termination would be speedy and fatal.

Fortunately for their patient, Felice had dreamed a dream, in which an angel had appeared to her, and strictly enjoined that she should return the young page's affection; and this vision had very luckily chosen for its visit the very night when Guy, thinking himself nearly at the point of death, had resolved to make one more effort, and either to procure a more gracious answer, or to expire at the feet of his mistress.

With great labour, and after frequent fainting fits, he at length made his way to an arbour in her garden, to which she habitually resorted, and, after making her a long and pathetic address, fell down in a swoon, from which one of the female attendants of this haughty beauty with difficulty recovered him.

[1] Gone. [2] Livid.

That maid yede to him weepind,
And Guy well sore bemened;[1]
"By God of heaven!" she said,
An ich were as fair a maid,
And as rich king's daughter were,
As any in this world are,
And he of my love under-nome[2] were,
As he is of thine, in strong mannere,
And he wold me so love yerne,[3]
Me think I no might it him nought wern![4]

Felice, though she reproved her maid for a facility which is sometimes fatal to her sex, was not insensible to this proof of Guy's affection; and even condescended so far as to promise that when he should have received the order of knighthood, and proved his valour in a suitable number of tournaments and battles, she should be ready to avow him as her lover, and even to reward him with the present of her hand.

This favourable answer recalled him to life; and the progress of his convalescence was so rapid, that he appeared in a few days at court, to the astonishment of his friends, in full health and strength; and, falling on his knees before Rohand, earnestly requested to be admitted, if he were judged worthy of such an honour, to the order of knighthood. The earl readily acceded to his wishes, and gave orders for the celebration of the ceremony with all possible solemnity at the approaching festival.

It was the holy Trinité
The earl dubbed Sir Guy so free:
And with him twenty good gomes,[5]
Knightes and barones sons.
Of cloth of Tars,[6] and rich cendale,[7]
Was the dobbing in each dele,[8]
The pavis[9] all of fur and gris,[10]
The mantels were of mickle price.
With rich armour and good stedis,
The best that were in land at nedis;

[1] Bemoaned. [2] Undertaken, i. e. occupied by. [3] Eagerly. [4] Warn, prohibit. [5] Men. [6] Tharsia. [7] A sort of thick silk. [8] In every part. [9] Perhaps a sort of short cloak thrown over the left arm. Pavois, in the French dictionaries, is interpreted a kind of buckler or large shield. [10] Gray fur, next in value to ermine.

Better was Sir Guy y-dight,
Than he was an emperor's son, I plight:[1]
So richly dubbed as was he,
Was never man in that contree.

The ceremony over, Guy hastened to Felice, whom he now hoped to find more docile to his wishes; but the lady coolly observed to him that the mere name of knight was no accession of merit, and that before he could claim the performance of her promise, it was necessary that he should fulfil the conditions on which it was made, by achieving such adventures as should render him worthy of her affection. Sir Guy, full of submission, again retired; and, repairing to his father, signified to him his intention of passing without delay into foreign countries, for the purpose of proving his valour. Segard could not refuse his consent to such a reasonable proposal; but, confiding him to the care of the valiant Heraud, to whom he added Sir Thorold and Sir Urry, two knights of approved valour, and assigning him a retinue suitable to his rank, and a considerable sum of money, gave him his paternal benediction, and dismissed him.

Sir Guy and his companions, having embarked at the nearest port, arrived, after a short and prosperous passage, in Normandy, and proceeded without delay to Rouen, the capital of the province. Observing preparations for the immediate celebration of a magnificent festival, they summoned their host, to inquire the news of the place; and were informed, to their great joy, that a tournament had been proclaimed, and was to be holden on the following day, in honour of Blanchefleur, a maiden of exquisite beauty, daughter of Reignier, emperor of Germany. A considerable number of knights, already signalised by many previous exploits, were arrived for the purpose of contending for the prize, which consisted of a milk-white falcon, a white horse, and two white greyhounds; besides which, the victor became entitled to claim the hand of the princess, unless he should have previously chosen, in his own country, the lady of his affections.

Sir Guy, who was overjoyed at this intelligence, having first, according to the invariable custom of chivalry, presented a beautiful palfrey to his host as a reward for the good news,

[1] I promise you.

immediately set off for the tournament. He successively overthrew Gaire, the son of the emperor; Otho, duke of Pavia; Reignier, duke of Sessoyne (Saxony); the duke of Lowayne (Louvain); and many others: while Heraud, Thorold, and Urry, on their parts, distinguished themselves by unhorsing their several antagonists. On the two following days the superiority of Sir Guy was no less manifest; and at the conclusion of the tournament, the prize was unanimously allotted to the valiant knight of Warwick.

With that came a sergeant prickand,[1]
Gentil he was, and well speakand,
To Sir Guy is he come,
And him he gret atte frome.[2]
"Thou art chosen chief in price
Of all this country, forsooth iwis.[3]
For thou hast won the tournament,
Ich make thee here this present
From the maiden Blanche-fleur,
That is my lordes daughter the emperour.
The ger-faulk, and the steed also,
The two greyhounds thereto,
And eke her love with them!
But[4] thou hast a fairer lemman,
She that is the tower within,
To day thou mayest her love win."
Well courteously answered Guy,
"Beau sire," he said, "grammercy!
Ich underfong[5] this present,
And thank her that thee hither sent.
Her druerie[6] ich underfong,
Her knight to be withouten wrong," &c.

At the same time he presented to the messenger a rich suit of armour and a sum of money, as a mark of respect to the beautiful Blanche-fleur, and dismissed him: after which, he dispatched two of his attendants into England, with orders to commend him to Rohand and his fair daughter; and to lay at their feet the trophies of his victory. Without staying any longer in Normandy, he proceeded into "far lands," travelling

[1] Riding quickly. [2] Immediately. A. S. [3] Certainly. [4] Unless. [5] Accept. [6] Friendship. A. S.

through Spain, Almayn, Lombardy, and the more distant parts of Europe; attending every tournament; gaining the prize in all; and establishing his fame as one of the most valiant and accomplished knights in Christendom. At the conclusion of a year, his friend Heraud observed to him, that, having been every where, he might now, with a safe conscience, return; and, Guy being of the same opinion, it was agreed that they should, on the next morning, set off for England, for the purpose of showing themselves at the court of Athelstan, their natural sovereign.

After a short stay in London, where they were received with the greatest kindness by the Saxon monarch, Sir Guy and his companions returned to Warwick, to the great joy of Segard and his wife, who had been long impatient to hail the arrival of a son whose reputation was now universally established. Rohand received him with his accustomed kindness, and all his court vied with each other in their expressions of gratulation: but Guy, tearing himself from the embraces of his friends, and even from the arms of his parents, eagerly sought an opportunity of throwing himself at the feet of Felice; from whom he now thought himself fully justified in expecting an explicit avowal of tenderness.

It were much to be wished, for the honour of the wise masters of Thoulouse, that, after instructing the fair Felice in the seven liberal arts, they had also taught her the art of knowing her own mind. But her scruples were not yet satisfied. She represented to Sir Guy, that he had, indeed, obtained a place amongst the most renowned knights in Christendom, but that he was not yet universally admitted to be matchless and unrivalled; and that, until he should have attained the very pinnacle of glory, though she should be proud to acknowledge him as her knight, she would never consent to give him her hand, at the risk of plunging him in sloth, and of extinguishing, amidst the pleasures of marriage, that noble spirit of chivalry by which he was so much endeared to her.

Sir Guy, whose education had not been so scientific as that of his mistress, was unable to answer, or even to understand this extreme refinement: but he was a lover, and he felt that his duty was implicit obedience: he therefore, after remonstrating against the extravagance of her expectations, kissed her hand, took his leave, and, hastening to Earl Rohand,

requested his permission to travel in "uncouth lands" in search of military glory.

The good earl, astonished at this abrupt and unexpected request, after so short a stay, urged every argument that affection could dictate to induce him at least to delay his departure; but, finding them ineffectual, reluctantly gave his consent to a measure, the motives of which, as he could not discover them, he had not the means of combating. Sir Guy now proceeded to his father and mother with the same request; which he prefaced with all the eloquent reasoning suggested by Felice: but the plain sense of Segard, who was not at all in love, and whose ambition was fully satisfied, could not be so easily perverted.

"Lief[1] son," he said, "leave that thought!
By my will shalt thou wend nought.
Thou shalt live here with me;
All the blither[2] will we be!"
"Leve son," his mother to him said,
"Do thou by thy father's rede![3]
Sojourn with us evermo:
I rede thee, son, that it be so.
Another year thou might over-fare:[4]
But thou bileve[5], I die with care!
For we ne have sons no mo,
Gif thee we shall now forego!"

These tender remonstrances sunk deep into the heart of Sir Guy; but the orders of his inflexible fair one left him no alternative. He commended his parents to God, and hurried from their presence. Having embarked with a fair wind, Sir Guy, and his faithful attendants Heraud, Thorold, and Urry, arrived in Flanders; and again travelled in quest of adventure through Spain, Germany, and Lombardy, bearing away the prize of every tournament, and in every country conciliating the affections of the inhabitants by numberless acts of generosity. But in returning through Italy his good fortune abandoned him. Merit so transcendent could not fail of exciting envy; and a severe wound which he received in a tournament at Beneventum having in a great measure impaired his strength, his enemies flattered themselves with the

[1] Dear. [2] Happier. [3] Counsel. [4] Pass over. [5] Remain.

hopes of accomplishing his destruction, and laid a plot for the purpose, the success of which was judged to be infallible.

The reader will remember that, amongst the knights whom Sir Guy overthrew in his first tournament near Rouen, was Otho, duke of Pavia. This felon Duke had in the first moments of his disgrace vowed vengeance against his conqueror; and having witnessed the combat near Beneventum, in which Sir Guy, though successful, was dangerously wounded, conceived that the moment was now arrived when he might easily get his enemy into his power. Being apprised of the route which the English knight intended to take, he sent for Earl Lombard, one of his most faithful adherents, together with fifteen other knights of approved courage, and, after reminding them of the allegiance which they had severally sworn to him, exacted a promise that they would obey his orders in a point which was essential to his happiness. He then placed them in ambush in a wood through which Sir Guy was obliged to pass, and directed them to fall on him and his followers by surprise; to kill his attendants without mercy; but, if possible, to reserve him alive for the purpose of undergoing a severer and more lingering punishment. The Italian knights accepted without scruple a commission which they hoped to execute without danger.

Now cometh Sir Guy riding,
Upon a mulet ambling.
His wound him grieveth swithe sore,
And smerte him ever the longer the more.
In peace he weened for to wende;
Ac of the traitour Lumbards unhend
The helms they seyen bright shine,
The steeds neighen and together whine[1].
" God!" quoth Guy, " we ben y-nome[2]!
All we be dead through treasoun!"

But Sir Guy was a stranger to fear; and the only effect of a danger so pressing and immediate was, to obliterate in a moment the sense of his pain and infirmity. Springing lightly from his mule, he hastily put on his armour, and prepared to face the enemy; while his faithful attendants in vain conjured him to save his life by a timely retreat, and leave them to

[1] Whinny and neigh. [2] Taken.

take the most advantageous position they could, and to defend it if possible against the superior numbers of their assailants.

With that come a Lombard ride,[1]
A moody man, and full of pride.
"Guy," quoth he, "yield thee anon!
Ye ben dead everich one!
To the duke we han truth plight
To bring him thy body this night."
With that ilk word, well smart
Guy him smote to the heart.
Ne spared he for no dreed,
But dead he felled him on the mead.
"By the truth I shall my lemman[2] yield,
To day nought shall thou thy truth held!"
Another Lombard he met anon:
Through the body the sword gan gon.
"Nor thou, thou traitor, shalt me lead
To thy duke that is full of quede."[3]

Sir Heraud, Sir Thorold, and Sir Urry, at the same time killed the three knights who were opposed to them; but the stoutest of the Lombards still remained behind. Earl Lombard, their leader, attacked and slew Sir Urry, but was himself killed by Sir Guy. Hugo, nephew to Duke Otho, making a furious stroke at Sir Thorold, laid him dead at his horse's feet.

When Sir Heraud he saw this,
That he fell down, and dead he is,
For his death he was sorry;
Him to awreke[4] he hath great hie.[5]
Never yet so sorry he ne was.
Toward Hugoun he made a ras;[6]
As a hound he hied him fast,
That his prey would have in haste.
Through the body he him smot
With great strength, God it wot,
That, before the Lombards all,
Off his horse dead he gan fall.

[1] Come ride, i. e. rode. The auxiliary verbs come, gin, can, &c., were once in universal use. [2] Mistress. [3] Wickedness, evil, mischief. [4] Revenge. [5] Haste. [6] A swift pace.

Unfortunately, Sir Gunter, one of Otho's most formidable knights, seizing the moment when Heraud was off his guard, struck him such a desperate blow, that he fell bleeding, and apparently lifeless, to the ground.

When Sir Guy saw Heraud y-felld,
To-hewen his hauberk and his shield;[1]
And off his horse felled he was,
As dead man, and lay on the grass,
And saw the blood that came him fro,
Wonder him thought; and said tho,[2]
"Thou! lording! to thee I say,
This day thou shalt well sore abeye[3]!
So mote ich ever word y-speak,
My master's death ich shall awreke.
And for a coward ich hold thee,
That slew him, and let me be.
By him that made sun and moon,
Thou shalt it wete[4] swithe[5] soon!
And thou shalt y-boast nought
That he is to death y-brought."

With these words Sir Guy spurred his steed, who rushed on his enemy with such velocity "that fire under the feet arose;" and so terrible was the blow of his rider, that Sir Gunter instantly sunk, cloven from the helmet to the pummel of the saddle. A second stroke of his sword took off the head of another Lombard. But Guy was now almost fainting through fatigue and pain; and his armour was so completely hewed to pieces, that he was exposed, almost defenceless, to the arms of his adversaries. These, indeed, were now reduced to two; but one of them was Guichard, the bravest of the Lombard knights, who advanced as to a certain victory. Yet such was Sir Guy's superiority, that Guichard, after losing his last companion, and receiving a dreadful wound, was glad to be indebted to the unrivalled swiftness of his horse for his escape to Pavia. Duke Otho learnt with astonishment and rage the escape of Sir Guy, and the destruction of his own knights; but his intended victim felt deeper anguish, while he surveyed, on the field of battle, the bodies of those faithful friends who had fallen in his defence.

[1] His coat of mail and shield hewed to pieces. [2] Then. [3] Suffer for, pay the price of. [4] Know. [5] Very.

"Alas!" he cried,
"For thy love, Felice, thou fair may[1],
The flower of knights is slain this day!
Yet, for thou art a woman,
Canst thou nought be blamed for-than:[2]
For the last ne be we nought,
That women have to ground y-brought!"

Nothing, certainly, but the extremity of distress could have wrung from this courteous and loyal knight a sentiment so derogatory to the honour of ladies; but it is to be remembered that Sir Guy was devoted and condemned to the search of such adventures, against his own wishes, in opposition to the will of his suzerain, and in defiance of the remonstrances of his parents, by the mere caprice of his haughty mistress. The virtues of Heraud and his other friends, who had followed him, without remonstrance or murmur, through so many unnecessary dangers; the friendly expostulations of Earl Rohand; and the pathetic complaints of Segard and his mother, at once assail him, and he falls into a swoon, exclaiming,

"Whoso nill nought do by his father's rede,
Oft sithes it falleth him quede!"[3]

But the reflection occurred too late. After many fruitless lamentations, he went in search of a hermit, to whom, after making him a present of "a good steed," he recommended the bodies of Sir Thorold and Sir Urry. From that of Heraud he could not separate himself; he therefore placed his aged preceptor on his own horse, and proceeded slowly with him to a neighbouring abbey; where, having related to the abbot the story of his misfortunes, and promised a liberal remuneration to himself and his brethren, in return for the most honourable burial that they could bestow on his friend, he consigned the body to their care, and retired to the cave of a hermit, which he discovered at no great distance, for the purpose of having his wound healed, without running the risk of a discovery from the vigilant malice of Duke Otho. As soon as his cure was completed he passed into Pole (Apulia), and from thence into Saxony, the residence of Duke Reignier, by whom he was most hospitably and honourably received. After this, meaning to return straight to England, he travels into Burgundy, then go-

[1] Maid. [2] Therefore. [3] Evil.

verned by duke Milon, where he distinguishes himself in valour, and his liberality to poor knights and to captives. During his residence in this country he discovers, to his inexpressible joy, his friend Heraud disguised as a palmer.

The abbot, of whom ich erst have telld,
Herhaud with great ruth beheld.
He did bearen his bodey
Into a chamber to disarray.
A monk of the house beheld him
Body and heved, and each limb;
Thilke monk a surgeon was,
The virtue he knew of many a grass.
The wound he beheld steadfastlich,
That in his body was grieslich;[1]
By the wounde he saw, iwis,
That to death wounded he nis;[2]
And saw that he him heal might,
And so he did full well, I plight.

Heraud, indeed, was still weak and poor; but Sir Guy, taking him up behind him on his horse, and conveying him to an adjoining city, soon supplied all his wants.

Heraud, without long rest,
Was clothed and bathed with the best:
White cloths of silk, and mantles fine,
Furred with gris,[3] and good ermine.

The two friends then take leave of Duke Milon, pass through Flanders, and arrive at St. Omers. Here, while Sir Guy is looking out of the window at his *inn*, he sees a palmer, whom he questions about news. The palmer tells him that the rich emperor (Reignier) has besieged Segwin, duke of Lavayne (Louvain), and laid waste his country, in consequence of his having slain, in a tournament, Sadoc the emperor's cousin, by whom he had been tauntingly provoked to combat. Segwin, after the event, had fled to his strong city of Seysone (Soissons?); which, however, he despaired of being long able to defend against the superior forces of the emperor.

Sir Guy, by the advice of Heraud, levies a small army of fifty knights, marches to the assistance of Segwin, and enters the city unperceived by the enemy. On the following morn-

[1] Horrible. [2] Is not. [3] A very costly fur.

ing, after hearing mass, he sallies out, attacks the imperial army which was conducted by the emperor's steward, overthrows him, and makes him prisoner, together with a considerable number of earls, barons, and other persons of distinction. The emperor, on receiving the news of this unexpected defeat, summons a council, at which it is determined to send Otho the "felon duke" of Pavia, together with Reignier, duke of Saxony, and the constable Wandomire of Cologne, at the head of thirty thousand men, to renew the siege. An obstinate battle ensues, in which a knight in the imperial army, Thierry of Gurmoise, son of Earl Aubry, performs prodigies of valour. But nothing can withstand the invincible Guy of Warwick. Duke Otho, severely wounded, is with difficulty carried off by his men, and Reignier and Wandomire, after the total rout of their troops, are made prisoners.

The emperor now marches in person, at the head of a still larger army; but his son Gaire (who had already been unhorsed by Sir Guy at his first feat of arms at Rouen) is again vanquished by him and carried into the town: and an assault undertaken by his father for his recovery having proved unsuccessful, the siege is converted into a blockade.

This eventful conflict between the head of the empire and his disobedient vassal, is terminated by a scene which strongly marks the singular spirit of chivalry. The emperor, to amuse himself during the state of inaction to which he is reduced, goes a-hunting in the forest, and in this defenceless situation is surprised by Sir Guy, who with an olive-branch in his hand thus addresses him:

Guy said, "God, that is full of might,
Save thee, sire, gentil knight!
And give thy men hap and grace,
Well to rede[1] thee in this place!
Duke Segwin sendeth me to thee,
That in good manner will love thee.
With glad cheer he prayeth you
To herborrow[2] with him now;
He shall you welcome, and your barons,
With swans, cranes, and herons,
And make you right well at ease.
These words," quoth Guy, "be no lese;[3]

[1] Advise. [2] Harbour or lodge. [3] Falsehood.

Duke Segwin will yield to thee
His castle and his good cité,
And all his landes, loud and still,[1]
And himself at your own will.
Therefore, sire, I warne yow,
To him ye must with me now;
For what more can he to thee do
Than thus meekly send thee to?"

All resistance being hopeless, the emperor, by the advice of his barons, quietly accompanied his conqueror into the city; where, though a prisoner, he was received as a master, and was served with the greatest humility by Sir Guy, and by all Segwin's adherents. In the morning he heard mass. Segwin in the mean time had abstained from appearing in his presence; and having summoned all his prisoners, earnestly requested their intercession to obtain his royal master's forgiveness. This they readily promised; and then

The duke yede to the chamber anon;
Off he did, withouten oaths,
His wede,[2] save his linen clothes,
Both barefoot and naked yede[3] he,
In hand a branch of olive tree:
And when he came to the emperour,
He fell on his knees with great dolour,[4]
And said, "Sire, mercy! certain
I will no more war thee again!
For that I have grieved thee ill,
I, and all mine, is at thy will!"

Gaire, and all the prisoners, who were become sincerely attached to Segwin in consequence of the kindness with which he had treated them during their captivity, join their prayers to those of those of the repentant duke, and, having obtained his pardon, thank the emperor on their knees. Sir Guy expresses his gratitude in the same humble posture. This happy reconciliation is celebrated with all kinds of festivity, and confirmed by a double marriage; the Duke of Saxony being wedded to the sister of Segwin, and Segwin to a niece of the emperor. Sir Guy, after rendering these important

[1] Everywhere. [2] Dress. [3] Went. [4] Grief.

services to his friend, takes leave of him, and departs in the emperor's suite.

There was he with the emperour,
A little stound,[1] with great honour.
They rivered[2] their falcons,
And took cranes and herons;
And when Guy would in forest chase,
His will he had in every place.
So it befell, upon a day,
As Sir Guy came from his play,
From hunting as he came riding,
He saw a dormound[3] come sailing:
To that dormound anon drew he.

It seems to have been an essential duty of chivalry to omit no opportunity of asking questions. Sir Guy interrogates the mariners of the vessel, and is informed that they come from Constantinople; that their cargo consists of plenty of merchandize,

Rich pelour, ermine and gris,
Cloths of silk and Alisaunder,[4]
And matres,[5] also salimander,—

but that it brings very bad news. The Greek emperor Ernis is besieged in his capital by the soudan with an army

Of thirty thousand Potelynes,
And so many Sarasins.

And when the vessel came away, the situation of the besieged was considered as nearly desperate.

Sir Guy, having consulted with Heraud, determines to levy an army of a thousand knights, the bravest that could be found in Almayne, and to march, without delay, to the relief of the distressed emperor. The reputation of Sir Guy was now so well established, that large as this number was, it was immediately collected and embarked; and Sir Guy was received with transports of joy by the good Ernis, who promised him, as a reward for this timely and effectual succour, the hand of his daughter, the heiress of the Greek empire.

The danger, indeed, was pressing; for at this very moment,

[1] Time. [2] Hawked by the river side. [3] A vessel of war. A. N.
[4] Alexandria. [5] A kind of rich cloth.

Coldran, cousin to the soudan, the most formidable general in the Saracen army, had commenced an attack upon the walls which the garrison was unable to repel. Sir Guy sallies out with his knights; cuts his way through the army of the assailants; kills Coldran; and mortally wounds Askeldart, the second in command, who only lives to carry the account of this defeat to the chief of the Saracens. The soudan, incensed but not intimidated by the ill success of this partial attempt, determines to assault the city in four days at the head of all his forces.

In the mean time Sir Guy is on the point of becoming the victim of an intrigue contrived by one of his own knights. Among the German nobles whom he had selected on account of their valour, was Sir Morgadour, steward to the emperor of Germany. This man, having seen the Princess Loret, became enamoured of her beauty; and immediately resolved, if possible, to wrest her hand and the crown of Constantinople from Sir Guy, whom he considered as an inferior, although he was willing, on account of his military talents, to fight under his banners. But, being aware that the emperor's word had been passed to his rival, it was necessary to have recourse to artifice. He therefore contrived the following stratagem.

One day, when the emperor was gone a-rivering,[1] he proposed to Sir Guy to play a game at chess with him in the apartment of the princess; to which the knight, not suspecting any treachery, readily consented. On their arrival,

> Guy gret that maid full courteously;
> The maid says, "Welcome, Sir Guy!"
> Guy took that maiden in arms two;
> With lovely cheer he kist her tho.

After this preface, Sir Morgadour and Sir Guy play their game at chess, in which the knight of Warwick is victorious; and his antagonist, under some trifling pretext, leaves him with the princess; takes horse; goes to meet the emperor on his return from the chase; and accuses Sir Guy of an attempt to debauch the virtue of the beautiful Loret. Ernis, however, refuses to believe that his deliverer can have formed a plan of corrupting a woman whose hand was already pledged to him,

[1] Hawking by the side of the river.

and totally discredits the accusation; upon which, the crafty German returns to Sir Guy, laments the falsehood and treachery of mankind, and assures him that the emperor, on the grounds of this ridiculous story, is determined to put him to death. Sir Guy becomes the dupe of the artifice; is filled with indignation at the treachery of Ernis; summons his knights; and is preparing to go over to the Saracens, when he meets the emperor; and, coming to an explanation with him, is made acquainted with the malice of Sir Morgadour.

Sir Guy, having learned by means of spies the intention of the soudan to assault the town, determines to meet the enemy in the field, instead of waiting their attack. Having explored the neighbouring mountains, he takes post in a spot strongly fortified by nature, and which he renders by his precautions nearly impregnable. There he resists the whole efforts of the Saracens; and, after a long and obstinate conflict, completely disperses their army. In the course of the battle,

> Cart wheels Guy let take;
> And good engines he let make.
> The engines were so sore castand,[1]
> That to the Saracens they came near-hand.
> Therewith he smote them in sunder;
> So sore they threw that it was wonder:
> Many a hill they threw down,
> That congealed was with stones brown.

Fifteen acres were covered with the bodies of slaughtered Saracens: and so furious were the strokes of Sir Guy, that the pile of dead men, wherever his sword had reached, rose as high as his breast. The soudan, too much incensed to reason very coolly, attributed a defeat so miraculous to the supineness or stupidity of his tutelary deities, on whom he revenged himself by burning some and throwing others into the sea; while the good Ernis was rejoicing at his delivery, and testifying his gratitude by heaping honours and riches on the hero of Warwick.

Sir Morgadour has now recourse to a fresh artifice. Being aware that the soudan had sworn to destroy every Christian who should either fall into, or unwarily place himself within, his power, he suggests to Ernis an advice which he incau-

[1] Forcibly thrown.

tiously adopts. Having assembled his parliament, he observes "that the soudan is collecting a fresh army, for the purpose of renewing his formidable attacks on the Christian powers; that a war with such an enemy could afford no prospect of its termination; that it were highly important to find some means of bringing it to a speedy issue; and that, with this view, it would be proper to propose the final decision of the quarrel by a single combat between two persons, who should be nominated as the respective champions of the Christians and Saracens." He concludes by asking, "whether any person is willing to become the bearer of this proposal to the soudan?" All are silent, until Sir Guy of Warwick, starting from his seat, demands to be sent on this perilous adventure. The emperor, alarmed at the danger of losing his intended son-in-law, assures him that this proposal was only intended by him as a trial of the fidelity and spirit of enterprise which prevailed in the assembly; and conjures him to forego an enterprise in which the most invincible strength and courage must prove useless. Guy is inflexible;

Guy asked his arms anon;
Hosen of iron Guy did upon:
In his hauberk[1] Guy him clad;
He drad[2] no stroke while he it had.
Upon his head his helm he cast,
And hasted him to ride full fast.
A circle of gold thereon stood;
The emperor had none so good.
About the circle, for the nonce,
Were set many precious stones.
Above he had a coat-armour wide;
His sword he took by his side,
And leapt upon his steed anon,
Stirrup with foot touched he none.
Guy rode forth, without boast,
Alone to the soudan's host.
Guy saw all that countree
Full of tents and pavilions be;
On the pavilion of the soudan
Stood a carbuncle stone.

[1] Coat of mail. [2] Dreaded.

Guy wist thereby it was the soudan's,
And drew him thither for the nonce.
At the meat he found the soudan,
And his barons every one;
And ten kings about him:
All they were stout and grim.
Guy rode forth, and spake no word
Till he came to the soudan's bord.
He ne saught with whom he met;
But on this wise the soudan he gret:—
"Lord that shope[1] both heat and cold,
And all this world hath in hold,
And suffered, on cross, passions fell,[2]
To buy man's soul out of hell,
Give thee, soudan! his malison;[3]
And all that lieven[4] on Mahoun!
God's curse have thee and thine,
And all that lieve on Apolyn!"

The soudan, being utterly unprepared with an answer to a mode of address so very unusual at his board, did not attempt to interrupt Sir Guy during the remainder of his message, which, having first satisfied his feelings by the foregoing exordium, he proceeded to deliver very minutely, and with due attention to decorum. At length, however, the monarch recovered the power of speech so far as to inquire the name of his insolent visitant; and to direct, after hearing it, that Guy of Warwick should instantly be seized and put to death. But Guy, not at all disconcerted by an order which it was much easier to pronounce than to execute, rushed on the soudan, cut off his head, deliberately picked it up with one hand, while he slew half a dozen of Saracens with the other, and, setting spurs to his horse, made his way through the camp, though assailed on all sides by the enemy.

During this time Heraud was, very fortunately, asleep in Constantinople; and thereby had the means of being apprised, by a vision, of the danger to which his friend was exposed. He instantly rose, assembled the German knights, and related his dream; on the faith of which they sallied forth, and, following the direct road to the Saracen camp, arrived just in

[1] Made; shaped. [2] Sharp; keen. [3] Malediction. [4] Believe.

time to rescue Sir Guy, who, nearly overcome by fatigue, returned with them in triumph to the city, and presented to the astonished Ernis the head of his haughty antagonist.

Soon after this perilous exploit, Ernis proceeds with Sir Guy on a circuit through his dominions. During their march they become spectators of a dreadful combat between a lion and a dragon. Guy felt an irresistible impulse to take a share in the conflict; assailed the dragon, and laid him dead at his feet. The lion immediately expressed his gratitude to his ally, licked his feet, fawned on him like a dog, and became, from that moment, his most officious and affectionate attendant.

The good emperor Ernis, more and more astonished at the valour and prudence of Sir Guy, at length formally proposes to him the hand of the accomplished Loret; which was accepted without hesitation, and a day fixed for the wedding. If the reader has not yet forgotten the all-accomplished Felice, the daughter of the Earl Rohand, it is probably because the laborious campaigns in Germany and in Turkey have not occupied in the recital quite so much time as they consumed in the acting. Certain it is that the hero of Warwick, banished during so many years from his native country, and constantly busied in the most arduous and important occupations, had lost all recollection of the object for whom he was first induced to sacrifice his time and health and comfort. Ernis, therefore, taking his daughter by the hand, in the presence of all the princes, dukes, earls, barons, archbishops, abbots, and priors of Constantinople, delivered her over to Sir Guy, together with the investiture of half his empire, and the promise of the remainder after his decease.

But the sight of the wedding-ring suddenly brought back to the memory of Sir Guy the image of his first mistress.

The wedding ring was forth brought;
Guy then on fair Felice thought.
He had her nigh forgotten clean!
'Alas!" he said, "Felice the sheen!"[1]
And thought in his heart anon,
"Against thee now have I misdone!"
Guy said, "Penance I crave:
None other maid my love shall have!"

[1] Bright; beautiful.

He then fell into a swoon; and, on his recovery, begged to defer the marriage, and retired to his inn, where he remained during a fortnight confined to his bed, in great anguish of mind and body, to the extreme distress of Ernis, of Loret, of Heraud, and of the lion, none of whom were at all able to account for his ill-timed and unexpected malady. At length he reveals the secret of his heart to Heraud, who at first recommends the completion of his marriage with Loret; but at length acquiesces in his determination of sacrificing to the original object of his passion the possession of a younger and more beautiful woman, together with the richest empire in the universe.

At the fortnight's end Guy returns to court, where he is much embarrassed by the kindness of Ernis and the tender affection of Loret, to which he feels himself unable to make a proper return. From this very awkward situation he was at length relieved by an unexpected accident. The lion, who owed his life to the matchless intrepidity of Sir Guy, had gradually familiarised himself with all the personages at the court of Ernis; and seemed to prefer, no less from taste than gratitude, a life of tranquillity at Constantinople to a series of contests with dragons in the wilderness. One day, while quietly sleeping in an herber, he was mortally wounded by Sir Morgadour. The blow was so sudden and so well aimed that the faithful animal was scarcely able to reach the chamber of Sir Guy, where he expired at his master's feet: but Sir Morgadour had been remarked by a damsel of the court, who hastened to report this act of cruelty and treachery; and the hero of Warwick, though he had borne his own wrongs with patience, instantly revenged the blood of his favourite by that of the assassin. The death of a person of so much importance as the steward of the German emperor, though certainly merited, was likely to involve the good Ernis in a very disagreeable altercation with a powerful sovereign; and Sir Guy, gladly availing himself of this excuse, determined, notwithstanding the intreaties of Ernis and Loret, to abandon for ever the court of Constantinople.

Having embarked on board of the first ship which he could find, he was carried by accident to the dominions of the Emperor Reignier, to whom he paid a short visit, without at all noticing the history of Sir Morgadour, and from thence passed

into Lorraine, with the intention of proceeding with all possible haste to England.

One day, travelling through a forest, having sent forward his attendants to the next town, for the purpose of making preparations for his reception, he hears a voice of lamentation, and finds a knight dangerously wounded. This appears to be Sir Thierry, who had long served in the armies of the duke of Lorraine, in consequence of an attachment to the fair Osile, the daughter of that sovereign; but through the treachery of Otho of Pavia, his rival, he had been beset by fifteen soldiers while carrying off his mistress with her own consent, and had fallen covered with wounds, the anguish of which, however, was less intolerable to him than the loss of his fair and tender Osile, whom the assassins had torn from him, and were then conducting to the arms of the felon Otho. Sir Thierry concludes his relation by requesting that Sir Guy would in due time procure for him the rites of burial; and that he would, in the mean while, spare no pains for the rescue of the lady. Sir Guy is astonished at the propensity of his old enemy Otho to quarrel with all worthy knights: but he has no time for reflection. He snatches up the sword and shield of Sir Thierry; pursues the ravishers; kills them all; takes the lady before him on his horse, and returns with her to the place where he had just left her lover. But her lover had in his turn disappeared. Incapable of resistance, he had been seized and carried off by four knights in the service of Otho. Sir Guy, leaving Osile, follows the trace of these knights, overtakes and vanquishes them, and returns with Sir Thierry. But now Osile was again missing. Fortunately she was no longer in the power of her ravishers. The attendants of Sir Guy, returning from the town in search of their master, had found her, and carried her in safety to his inn, whither Sir Guy, after a long and fruitless search, carries Sir Thierry, and the lovers are reunited. Sir Guy procures a leech to cure the wounded knight, who vows eternal friendship and allegiance to his deliverer.

So it befell, upon a day,
As Sir Guy at the window lay,
And Sir Thierry lay him by,
In the street they saw a knight weary.

"Sir knight," quoth Guy, "I pray thee,
What seekest thou in this countree?"
"Sir, I seek Thierry of Gurmoise—"

He was come to tell him that Loyer, duke of Lorraine, and the felon Otho of Pavia, had determined to lay waste the possessions of Aubry, Thierry's father, in revenge of his son's successful passion for Osile. Sir Guy, of course, embraces the cause of his brother-in-arms; sends into Almayne an invitation to all valiant knights; draws five hundred of them to his standard, and repairs with them and Thierry to the city of Gurmoise.

On the following day the constable of the duke of Lorraine arrives with an army before the town. Sir Guy, having first heard mass, issues the necessary orders for defence. He first sends out Sir Thierry, at the head of a hundred knights, to keep the enemy in check; and when he, after many feats of valour, begins to be distressed, Sir Guy marches to his relief, and, after a severe contest, disperses the army of Lorraine, and returns with a number of prisoners, amongst whom is the general in chief. The next day Duke Otho arrives in person at the head of a second and more powerful army, which is instantly attacked by Sir Guy, Sir Heraud, and Sir Thierry, thrown into confusion, and pursued to a considerable distance. But Sir Heraud, following Otho with too much impetuosity, is surrounded; and, his sword breaking in his hand, is taken prisoner by the enemy. Guy misses his friend, returns with Sir Thierry in search of him, overtakes Sir Otho, wounds him, rescues Sir Heraud, and returns in triumph into the city. Sir Otho has now recourse to treachery. The duke of Lorraine, unable to resist his importunity, consents to become a party in the most infamous artifice. He sends to Aubry an archbishop empowered to offer the most solemn assurances of forgiveness, together with a confirmation of the marriage between Thierry and Osile, provided they will repair to their sovereign at an appointed spot, and there consent to make an apology for their conduct. Sir Guy, who was well acquainted with the dissimulation of Otho, suspects the fraud, but, on the faith of the archbishop, consents at length to accompany his friends. They all set out unarmed. At a day's journey from Gurmoise they meet the duke of Lorraine, who, after embracing Thierry and Sir Guy, gives them the kiss of friend-

ship and reconciliation. Otho advances, apparently for the same purpose; but suddenly stops, and directs a body of his adherents, whom he has previously placed in ambuscade, to seize the whole company as rebels, and traitors to their sovereign. Sir Heraud and Sir Thierry are instantly surrounded and carried off; but Sir Guy, more wary and more active, makes his way through the assailants, many of whom, though unarmed, he strikes dead with his fist; and at last makes his escape, with the loss of his mantle, which is torn in pieces during the struggle. Meeting a countryman in his flight, he borrows a staff, with which he quickly destroys the most forward of his pursuers; repays the obligation by the present of a horse, which he takes from one of his vanquished enemies, rides off on another, plunges with it into a rapid river, is borne in safety to the opposite bank, and escapes. In the mean time Sir Heraud is carried off as a prisoner by the duke of Lorraine; and Otho takes possession of Osile, together with Sir Thierry, whom he transports to Pavia, and throws into a dungeon. Osile, unable to resist the power of her ravisher and the orders of her father, is too happy in being permitted to defer for forty days a marriage which is to consign her to endless misery.

Sir Guy, in despair at the loss of his friends, and wandering without design, arrives at the castle and requests herborow (lodging), which is granted. Very fortunately this castle, though situated in an enemy's country, is the property of Sir Amys of the Mountain, a knight of distinguished valour and generosity; who, having often fought and triumphed under the banners of Sir Guy, is rejoiced at this opportunity of repaying the obligation he owes to an old benefactor.

> Then let he lead Guy's steed straight;
> Before his own he let him eat.
> By the hand he took Guyon,
> And yede to hall, and set him down.
> A mantle of silk was brought fast,
> And over Guy's shoulders he let it cast.

At dinner they reciprocally relate their adventures. Sir Amys offers an army of five hundred knights, five hundred squires, and five hundred servants, to attack Otho; but Sir Guy observes, with great truth, that the preparations neces-

sary for such an enterprise would require too much time. He determines on a mode of action more suited to his impatience, and to his just confidence in the resources of his own genius and prowess. After refreshing himself, during eight days, in the castle of his friend, and having fully digested his plan, he assumes such a disguise as to secure him against all possibility of detection, tinges his face and eyes-brows, and arrives, quite alone, at the court of Otho, to whom he presents a destrere (or war-horse) which he declares to be of inestimable value, demanding no other recompense than the means of revenging himself on the perfidious and wicked Sir Thierry. Otho, blinded by his own hatred and by the artifice of Sir Guy, immediately appoints him to be the jailer of the unfortunate prisoner.

Guy found Thierry in a pit;
Forty fathom deep was it!

He seizes a moment when he thinks himself unobserved, to make himself known to his friend, and to sooth his distress by the promise of immediate rescue: but these few hasty words are overheard by a "false Lombard," who instantly runs off to acquaint Otho with this important discovery. Fortunately Sir Guy, conscious of his danger, anticipates the purpose of the felon, and, having in vain attempted to bribe him to silence, follows him into the presence of the duke, and with one blow kills him at the foot of the throne. Otho, astonished at this outrage, menaces him with instant death: but Sir Guy, now perfectly at ease with respect to the fatal secret, coolly answers, that the traitor whom he had just slain was detected in carrying food to Sir Thierry; and the indignant Otho is perfectly satisfied with the apology. The knight then goes out to purchase provisions, which he carries to his friend; procures admittance to the presence of Osile; promises her a certain and speedy rescue; at the same time recommending, as a measure necessary to her delivery, that she should no longer attempt to put off her union with Sir Otho, and then retires to complete his measures for the accomplishment of his purpose.

On the night preceding the wedding day he puts on a suit of armour which Osile had prepared for him; liberates Sir Thierry; helps him to climb over the walls of the town; explains to him the means of reaching the castle of Sir Amys;

and, riding at the break of day to meet the marriage procession, kills Otho, carries off Osile from the midst of his knights, and bears her in safety to her lover.

Having thus far satisfied his vengeance, he proposes to Sir Amys and Sir Thierry a new enterprise, for the purpose of punishing the Duke of Lorraine; but that sovereign, sufficiently alarmed by the first notice of their preparations, requests the kind intercession of Sir Heraud, whom, though he still detains at his court, he had honourably treated; and Sir Heraud having consented to become his borrow (pledge or security), a reconciliation is effected, and Sir Thierry, with her father's consent, is solemnly united to the fair Osile.

Sir Guy, constantly anxious for his return to England, but as constantly turned aside by fresh adventures, goes with his friends on a party of boar-hunting; and one of these animals, which, on account of its enormous size, he had selected for his prey, being obstinately pursued by him, carries him into Flanders, at that time governed by a king called Florentine. Sir Guy, having at length overtaken and killed the boar, begins, as usual on such occasions, to blow his horn.

> Then said King Florentyne,
> "What noise is this? 'Fore saint Martyn,
> Some man," he said, "in my franchise,[1]
> Hath slain my deer, and bloweth the prize."

An insult of this importance could not fail of awakening the royal indignation; and Florentine dispatched his own son, with orders to bring the culprit immediately before him. Unluckily, the prince attempted to execute the commission with so little ceremony that the Knight of Warwick was much offended, and testified his displeasure at such an impertinent message by a blow with his horn, which laid the messenger dead at his feet. After this exploit, to which, at the time, he paid little attention, he quietly repairs to the palace, and asks for *harbour*, is honourably received, and is seated at the king's table: but, during dinner, the prince's body is brought in, and Florentine learns, with equal rage and astonishment, that his new guest is the murderer. The unhappy father seizes an axe from the hand of an attendant, and aims, but without effect, a dreadful blow at Sir Guy, who is at the

[1] Park.

same time assailed on all sides, but escapes in safety, after having killed fourteen of his assailants. Having at length found his way back to Sir Thierry, he spends a short time with that faithful friend, and then with Sir Heraud, takes his leave, and departs for England, where he arrives without further impediment.

Immediately after his landing he repairs to York, where he is honourably received by King Athelstan: but the King has scarcely time to express his congratulations on his safe return, when a messenger brings him the tidings of a most portentous dragon, who was then desolating the county of Northumberland:

He is as black as any coal,
Rugged as a rough foal:
His body, from the navel upward,
No man can pierce, it is so hard.
His neck is great as any sommere;[1]
He runneth as swift as any destrere.[2]
Paws he hath as a lion,
All that he toucheth he slayeth dead down;
Great wings he hath to flight,
There is no man that bear him might.
There may no man fight him again,
But that he slayeth him certain;
For a fouler beast than is he,
I-wiss of none never heard ye.

Sir Guy, who had an old enmity to dragons, readily undertakes this adventure, to the great comfort of Athelstan; but so very dreadful was the appearance of this monster, that even Sir Guy, though a stranger to fear, could not refrain from saying his prayers with more earnestness and solemnity than he had ever used in any of his preceding combats. The battle was long and obstinate, because the dragon's scales were impenetrable; but at length the knight, watching his opportunity, drove his sword the throat of his enemy; after which he cut off his head, and carried it in triumph to Athelstan at Lincoln. Having thus signalised himself in his native country, by an exploit which all England beheld with astonishment, he suddenly withdrew from court, and, with filial

[1] A sumpter horse. [2] A war-horse.

eagerness, hastened to Wallingford. But, alas! his parents were no more! Sir Guy, therefore, after bestowing on his old friend Heraud the whole inheritance, impatiently hurried to Warwick, to offer at the feet of Felice the laurels which he had acquired in every part of Christendom.

He told her, as I understand,
Of all his fare[1] in divers land,
And altogether how he had sped,
And how that he was often bid
By many ladies, of great honours,
King's daughters, and emperours;
"And all I forsook, truly,
For thee, Felice," said Sir Guy.

During the long absence of her admirer, Felice had found leisure for reflection; she now, therefore, openly avowed her passion, and with the full consent of her father, who sincerely rejoiced in obtaining such a son-in-law, was finally united to her lover. Every inhabitant of Warwick sympathized in the happiness of their hero, and of good Earl Rohand; many weeks were passed in constant festivity; and the pregnancy of the fair Felice, which was soon after announced, gave rise to new rejoicings.

Here, therefore, the reader will naturally expect a termination of this long-winded story; but, unfortunately, the piety of Sir Guy was neither less capricious, nor less disastrous in its consequences, than the affection of his mistress. He had been taught that other duties were more sacred and more acceptable in the sight of Heaven, than those of husband and father. But the historian shall tell his own story. At the end of forty days after the marriage, it happened that

As Sir Guy came from play,
Into a tower he went on high,
And looked about him, far and nigh;
Guy stood, and bethought him, tho,
How he had done many a man wo,
And slain many a man with his hand,
Burnt and destroyed many a land,
And all was for woman's love,
And not for God's sake above.

[1] Journey.

Felice, who had observed his reverie, inquired the cause; and learnt, with horror and astonishment, his determination to spend the remainder of his life in a state of penance and mortification. He contented himself with directing her, whenever their child should be of proper age, if it should prove a son, to intrust his education to Sir Heraud; and quitted her without taking leave of the Earl, and even without communicating to his old companion Heraud the singular resolution he had formed. Felice, unable to detain him, places on his finger a gold ring, requesting him to bestow at least a thought on her whenever he should cast his eyes on that pledge of her affection; and her husband, after promising to obey her instructions, assumes the dress of a palmer, and departs for the Holy Land.

Felice communicates to Rohand the news of this unexpected misfortune; and the good Earl is persuaded, with great appearance of probability, that Sir Guy can mean no more than to put her affection to the test, by a conduct as capricious as her own. She at first is disposed to put an end to her life, but is checked by the thoughts of her child. Sir Heraud, in hopes of diverting his friend from his resolution, takes the habit of a pilgrim, and travels in quest of him, but returns without success.

> Guy sought hallowes[1] in many countré,
> And sithe to Jerusalem went he;
> And when he to Jerusalem came,
> To Antioch his way he name.[2]

Here occurs a very strange and very tedious episode—

> He found,
> As he went in his journey,
> A fayre well certayne,
> One sat thereby in slavayne[3].
> A fair body he had, and a long visage,
> He seemed to be of high parentage.

This personage was a certain Earl Jonas, who had fifteen sons, at whose head he went to make war against the Saracens; but, after a long engagement, in course of which all their swords broke in their hands, they became the captives

[1] Saints. [2] Took. [3] A pilgrim's robe.

of a certain Sir Triamour. This petty monarch being summoned, together with his son Fabour, to attend the court of his suzerain, the soudan of Persia, is unexpectedly involved in a very dangerous adventure. Fabour is invited by the Prince of Persia to play with him at chess; and, being, unfortunately, better skilled in that game than in the arts of a courtier, has the imprudence to give check-mate to the haughty son of the soudan, who, offended by his presumption, wounds him on the head with the chess-board. Fabour very humbly, and it must be confessed very reasonably, remonstrates against this mode of commenting on the game; but his arguments having no other effect than to inflame the fury of his antagonist, he seizes the chess-board in his turn, and, with one blow, lays the prince dead at his feet. He then communicates the intelligence of what he had done to Jonas, and they immediately retire from court. But the power of the soudan was sufficient to reach them in their retreat. They are summoned to exculpate themselves before an assembly of their peers; and the fact being admitted, Fabour is condemned to fight, either in person or by deputy, the champion of the soudan, the ferocious Amiraunt of Ethiopia, a giant whom no Saracen had yet been able to resist. The only favour they can obtain is the usual respite of a year and a day, for the purpose of obtaining a champion hardy enough to undertake the combat. Triamour, returning to his capital, summons Jonas into his presence, and asks him if he is acquainted with any Christian hero capable of overcoming the giant; and the prisoner having named two, Sir Guy and Sir Heraud, the king dispatches him in search of one or the other; with the promise of liberty and the most ample rewards in case of success, and the denunciation of death to himself and all his sons in case of his failure.

The reader is aware that the search of Earl Jonas has hitherto been unsuccessful, that the fatal period is nearly expired, and that, in relating his story to Sir Guy, whom he is unable to recognise in the disguise of a palmer, he is guided by courtesy rather than by any hope of deriving benefit by his assistance. The hero of Warwick, of course, offers to undertake the adventure; is accepted, though not without hesitation; is presented to Triamour, properly armed, and introduced into the lists. The combat is long and obstinate;

and the giant, after receiving many wounds, requests of his adversary a momentary respite, for the purpose of slaking his thirst in the neighbouring river; and with this request our hero, who was the model of courtesy, readily complies; when the giant, perfectly recovered from his fatigue, recommences the combat with renewed vigour. Sir Guy, growing thirsty in his turn, makes a similar request, meets with a rude refusal, but accomplishes his purpose by superior agility; returns to the attack; cuts off successively both the giant's arms; finally kills him, and then severs his head from his body; Jonas and his sons are delivered from prison; and Sir Guy, after disclosing his name, departs in pursuit of adventures. In the mean time Felice has been brought to bed of a son, the illustrious Raynburn. Having carefully tended him during the first four years, she places him, according to the orders of her husband, under the tuition of the experienced Heraud. But Fate had determined that he should receive an early lesson in the school of adversity.

So, on a day, I understand
Merchants came into England,
Into London out of Russie,
With Englishmen to sell and buy.
They gave King Athelstan silver and gold
To buy and sell where they would.
So, on a day, withouten lie,
The Saracens gan this child espie;
Guy's son, fair Raynbron,
And stole him away with treason.

After this

They sailed with their prey to an haventown,
Into a king's land, as I guess,
That was well far in heathenness;
The king's name was Aragus.

To him Raynburn was presented; and Aragus, pleased with his appearance, clothed him magnificently, caused his education to be completed, made him his chamberlain, and conferred on him the order of knighthood.

Heraud, as soon as he heard that his charge was stolen, set off in pursuit of him: but he was far less fortunate than his ward; he was shipwrecked on the coast of Africa, and, after

dful conflict with the natives, was finally overpowered
rown into a dungeon, in which he was suffered to lan-
, secluded from his friends and forgotten by his enemies,
his pupil was signalizing himself by such feats of early
ss as to excite astonishment in every part of the
en empire.

t it is now time to return to Sir Guy, who, solely occu-
with devotional pursuits, had travelled to Constantinople,
rom thence into Almayne. Here he chances to meet a
im who "made semblaunt sorry." Guy enters into con-
tion with him, and finds him to be his old friend Sir
rry, who had been dispossessed by the emperor of all his
and reduced to the greatest distress, in consequence of a
accusation preferred against him by Barnard, cousin of
famous Duke Otho, the felon Duke of Pavia, who had
ited the estates and the vices of that treacherous prince,
unfortunately for the imperial vassals, possessed to the
degree the confidence of his master, together with the
ity of steward to the emperor. Sir Guy, on hearing that
leath of Otho, whom he had slain, had been employed to
uin of his friend Thierry, falls into a swoon; a practice
hich, as we have seen, he was much addicted.

"Good man," quoth Thierry, "tell thou me
How long this evil hath holden thee?"
"Many a day," quoth Sir Guy, "it took me ore!"
"Good love!" quoth Thierry, "do it no more!"

ierry proceeds to lament the supposed death of Sir Guy,
though full of compassion for his friend, and already
mined to redress his injuries, continues to conceal his
. But Thierry was weak and faint with hunger; and
uy tells him, that as "he has a penny in his purse," it
d be expedient to hasten to the nearest town, and employ
sum in the purchase of provisions. Thierry willingly
mpanies him, but, feeling sleepy as well as faint, is ad-
to refresh himself, in the first instance, with a few
ents' repose; and the famished Thierry falls asleep with
ead resting on the knees of Sir Guy. During his slum-
a "white weasel" suddenly jumps out of his mouth;
refuge in the crevice of a neighbouring rock, and after
rt space of time returns, and again runs down his throat.

Sir Thierry, waking, informs Sir Guy that he had dreamed a dream; that he had seen a "fair bright sword" and a treasure of inestimable value, and that, sleeping on his arm, he had been saved by him from a dreadful calamity. The supposed palmer interprets the dream; goes to the spot indicated by the weasel, and finds the sword and treasure; which he delivers to Sir Thierry, with an injunction to preserve the sword with the greatest possible care, and then takes his leave.

Sir Guy now repairs to the emperor's palace, asks charity, and is admitted into the hall. As his habit bespeaks him a traveller, he is on all sides assailed by inquiries after news; and the emperor, having a very proper opinion of his own importance, questions him on the reports prevailing among his subjects respecting his character. Guy boldly assures him that he is universally blamed for the flagrant injustice of his conduct towards the innocent Thierry; and, throwing down his glove, offers to prove, by force of arms, the falsehood of Barnard's accusation. The steward, though not a little surprised by the appearance of such an uncouth adversary, accepts the challenge; the battle is awarded; the palmer is presented with a suit of armour, and then repairs to Thierry for the sword which had been miraculously discovered by the white weasel. Sir Barnard, however, was so stout, that after a combat which lasted during the whole day the victory was still undecided: but he had discovered during this trial of the palmer's prowess, that it would be much more convenient to get rid of his adversary by any other means than to abide by the issue of a second conflict. Judging therefore that the palmer would sleep soundly after his fatigue, he dispatches a number of his emissaries, with orders to take him up in his bed in the middle of the night, and throw him into the sea. Although Sir Guy was lodged in the palace, being under the immediate protection of the justice of the empire, this bold enterprise was successfully executed; and Sir Guy, when he awaked in the morning, was not a little astonished to find himself floating in his bed, at some distance from land. But Providence, who had intended that the guilt of Sir Barnard should become completely manifest, directed a fisherman to the spot, who conveyed Sir Guy in safety to the palace, and related this miraculous incident to the emperor. The monarch having determined that the punishment of the steward should

be inflicted by the champion whom Heaven had thus marked out for the purpose, the battle recommences, and Sir Barnard, already half vanquished by the reproaches of his own conscience, is overpowered and slain. The victor then demands the reinstatement of Sir Thierry, and, having obtained it, goes in search of his friend, whom he finds in a church, devoutly engaged in prayer, and hastily leads him to the emperor, who weeps at the sight of his distress, and restores him to all his possessions.

The emperor let bathe Thierry,
And clad him in clothes richely,
And gave him both palfrey and steed,
And all things that he had of need.

Sir Thierry, who had hitherto felt little confidence in the assurances of the pilgrim, was now filled with the warmest gratitude towards his deliverer; and his gratitude was exalted to enthusiasm, when, having been invited to accompany him during a part of his journey, he discovered, in this deliverer, his old friend and benefactor. He adjured Sir Guy to share the prosperity he had bestowed; but the hero, only solicitous to become an humble instrument in the hands of Providence, and determined to fulfil his destiny, whatever it might be, tore himself from his embraces, and, pursuing his journey, arrived, without meeting any new adventures, in England.

Athelstan was, at this moment, in the greatest distress. He was besieged in Winchester by Anlaf, king of Denmark, and had only obtained a temporary respite from the assault, by stipulating to produce a champion who should enter the lists in his defence against the terrible Colbrand. Such a champion, however, he was well aware, could not be found in Winchester, and he seemed destined to fall under the yoke of the Danish monarch; when, after spending some days in prayer and abstinence, he was instructed by "an angel from heven light" to intrust his defence to the first pilgrim whom he should meet at the entrance of his palace. This pilgrim, as the reader will have foreseen, was Sir Guy; and Athelstan condescended to ask, on his knees, the assistance of the Heaven-directed champion.

"Do way,[1] leve sir," said Guy,
"Ich am an old man, of feeble body;

[1] Cease.

My strength is fro me fare!"[1]
The king fell on knees to ground,
And cryed him mercy in that stound,
Gif it his will were.
And the barouns did also;
O[2] knees they fellen alle tho,
With sorrow and sighing sare.
Sir Guy beheld the lordings all,
And swich sorrow hem was befall
Sir Guy had of hem care.

Sir Guy took up the king anon,
And bade the lordings, everichon,
That they should up-stond;
And said, "For God in trinité,
And for to make England free,
The battle I nim[3] on hond."
Then was the king full glad and blithe,
And thanked Guy a thousand sithe,[4]
And Jesu Christes sond.[5]
To the king of Denmark he sent than,
And said he had founden a man
To fight for Engelond.

The Danish men busked[6] hem yare
Into the battle for to fare;
To fight they were well faw;[7]
And Guy was armed swithe well,
In a good hauberk of steel,
Wrought of the best law.[8]
An helm he had of mickle might,
With a secle of gold[10] that shone bright,
With precious stones on rawe:
In the front stood a carbuncle stone;
As bright as any sun it shone,
That gleameth under shaw.[11]

On that helm stood a flower;
Wrought it was of divers colour:

[1] Gone. [2] On. [3] Take. [4] Time. [5] Sending; message. [6] Prepared. [7] Ready. [8] Glad. [9] Manner. [10] A plate of gold. [11] A thicket, or wood.

Merry it was to behold.
Trust and true was his ventayle,[1]
Gloves, and gambeson,[2] and hosen of mail,
As good knight have shold.
Girt he was with a good brond,[3]
Well kervand;[4] beforen his hond,
A targe[5] listed[6] with gold,
Portrayed with three kings corn,[7]
That present God when he was born;
Merrier was none on mould.

And a swift ernand[8] steed
Alwrin[9] they did him lead,
His tire[10] it was full gay;
Sir Guy upon that steed wond,[11]
With a good glaive[12] in his hond,
And pricked him forth his way.
And when he came to the place
Where the battle locked[13] was,
Guy light withouten delay,
And fell on knees down in that stede,
And to God he bade his bede,[14]
He should ben his help that day.

"Lord!" said Guy, "that reared Lazaroun,[15]
And for man tholed[16] passioun,
And on the rood[17] gun bleed;
That saved Suzan from the feloun,
And halp Daniel from the lioun,
To day, wiss me and rede![18]
As thou art mighti heven-king,
To day grant me thy blessing,
And help me at this need;
And, Levedy Mary! full of might,

[1] The moveable front to a helmet, which covered the face, and through which the wearer respired the air. [2] A stuffed and quilted habit, fitted to the body to prevent the chafing of the external armour, as well as to check the progress of a weapon. [3] Sword. [4] Cutting. [5] Shield. [6] Bordered. [7] Chosen. Sax. [8] Running. [9] Probably the horses' name. [10] Accoutrements. [11] Went. [12] A weapon composed of a long cutting blade at the end of a lance. [13] Fixed, appointed. [14] Prayer. [15] Lazarus. [16] Suffered. [17] Cross. [18] Instruct and advise.

To day save Englandes right,
And lene[1] me well to speed!"

When the folk was samned[2] by both side,
The two kings, with mickle pride,
After the relics they send;
The corporas,[3] and the mass-gear,
On the halidom[4] they gun swear,
With wordes free and hend.
The king of Denmark swore first, y-wiss,
Gif that his giant slayen is,
To Denmark he shall wend,
And never more England come within,
Ne none after him of his kin,
Unto the worldis end.

Sithen swore the King Athelston,
And said among hem everichon,
By God, that all may weld,[5]
Gif his man there slayn be,
Or over-comen, that men may see,
Recreant in the field,
His man he will become on hand,
And all the realm of England,
Of him, for to held;
And hold him for lord and king,
With gold and silver, and all thing,
Great truage[6] him for to yield.

When they had sworn, and hostage found,
Colbrand stert up in that stound;
To fight he was full fell:
He was so mickle, and so unrede,[7]
That none horse might him lead,
In gest as I you tell;
Unnethe[8] a cart might him bear,
So many he had of armes-gear,[9]
The English for to quell;
Swiche armour as he had upon,

[1] Give; grant. [2] Assembled together. [3] The cloth which was placed beneath the consecrated elements in the sacrament. [4] Sanctuary; sacrament. [5] Govern. [6] Tribute. A. N. [7] Unwieldy. [8] Scarcely. [9] Armour.

Y-wiss ne heard ye never none,
But as it were a fiend of hell.

Of mails was nought his hauberk,
It was all of another work
That marvel is to hear;
All it were thick splints of steel,
Thick, y-joined strong and well,
To keep that fiendis fere.[1]
Hosen he had also well y-wrought,
Other than splintes was it nought,
From his foot to his swere:[2]
He was so mickle and so strong,
And, thereto, so wonderlich long,
In the world was none his peer.

An helm[3] he had on his heved set,
And ther-under a thick basinet;[4]
Unseemly was his weed:
A targe he had y-wrought full well,
(Other metal was there none but steel),
A mickle and unrede.
All his armour was black as pitch,
Well foul he was, and loathlich,
A grisly gome[5] to fede.
The high king, that sitteth on high,
That welt[6] this world far and nigh,
Make him well evil to speed!

A dart he bare in his hand kervand,[7]
And his weapon about him stondand,
Both behind and beforn;
Axes, and gisarmes,[8] sharp y-ground,
And glaives, for to give with wound,
Two hundred and mo there worn.[9]
The English beheld him fast;
King Athelstan was sore aghast,
England he should have lorn.[10]
For when Guy saw that wicked hert,

[1] Devil's companion. [2] Neck. [3] A helmet. [4] A light helmet worn under the other. [5] Man. [6] Rules. [7] Carving, cutting. [8] Battle-axes. [9] Were. [10] Lost.

He nas never so sore afeard,
Siththen that he was born.

Sir Guy lept on his steed fote-hot,[1]
And with a spear that well bote,[2]
To him he gan to ride;
And he shot to Guy dartes three;
Of the tway then failed he,
The third he let to him glide.
Thorough Guy's shield it glode,[3]
And thorough his armour, without abode,
Between his arm and side;
And quitelich[4] into the field it yede,
The mountaunce[5] of an acre brede,
Ere that it would abide.

Sir Guy to him gan to drive,
That his spear brast a-five[6]
On his shield that was so bound;
And Colbrand, with mickle heat,
On Guy's helm he would have smit,
And failed of him that stound.
Betwix the saddle and the arsoun,[7]
The stroke of that felon glode adown,
Withouten wem[8] or wound,
That saddle and horse atwo[9] he smot,
Into the earth well half a foot,
And Guy fell down to ground.

Sir Guy, astite,[10] up stert,
As man that was agremed[11] in heart,
His steed he had forlore.
On his helm he would hit him tho,
Ac he no might nought reach therto,
By two foot and yet more.
But on his shoulder the sword fell down,
And carf[12] both plates and haubergeon,
With his grimly gore.
Thorough all his armour stern and strong,

[1] Immediately. [2] Cut. [3] Glided. [4] Quite. [5] Amount. [6] Burst in five pieces. [7] The bow of a saddle. [8] Hurt. [9] In two. [10] Immediately. [11] Sorrowed. [12] Carved, cut.

He made him a wound a span long,
That grieved him full sore.

Colbrand was sore ashame,
And smot Guy with mickle grame,[1]
On his helm he hit him tho;
That his flowers everichon,
And his good carbuncle stone
Well even he carf a-two.
Even a-two he smot his shield,
That it flew into the field:
When Guy saw it was so,
That he had his shield forlorn,
Half behind and half beforn,
In heart him was well wo.

And Guy hent[2] his sword in hand,
And hetelich[3] smot to Colbrand;
As a child he stood him under;
Upon the shield he gave him swich a dent,
Before the stroke the fire out went,
As it were light of thunder.
The bands of steel he carf each one,
And into the shield a foot and half on,
With his sword he smote asunder.
And with the out-braiding[4] his sword brast;
Though Guy were than sore aghast,
It was little wonder.

Tho was Guy sore dismayd,
And in his heart well evil apayd,[5]
For the chance him was befall;
And, for he had lorn his good brond
And his steed upon the sond,
To our Levedy he can call.
Then gan the Danish host
Each pricken other, and maken boast,
And said, among hem all,
"Now shall the English be slain in field;
Great trewage England shall us yield,
And evermore be our thrall."

[1] Anger. [2] Took. [3] Hotly, eagerly. [4] Out-starting. [5] Pleased.

"Now, Sir knight," said Colbrand,
"Thou hast lorn thi sword in thine hand,
Thy shield, and eke thy steed,
Do now well; yield thee to me,
And smartlich[1] unarme thee;
Cry mercy I thee rede.
And, for thou art so doughty knight,
Thou durst again me held fight,
To my lord I shall thee lead;
And with him thou shalt accorded be;
In his court he will hold thee,
And find that thee is need."

"Do way!" said Guy, "thereof speak nought;
By Him that all this world hath wrought,
I had liever thou were an-hong![2]
Ac thou hast armes great plenté;
I-wis thou must lene[3] me
One of thine axes strong."
Colbrand swore, "By Apolyn,
Of all the weapons that is mine,
Her shalt thou none afong![4]
Now thou wilt not do by my rede,
Thou shalt die an evil dede[5]
Ere that it be ought long!"

When Guy heard him speak so,
Al soon he gan him turn tho,
And to his weapons he geth,
There his axes stoden by hemselve;
He kept one with a well good helve,[6]
The best, him thought, he sceth.
To Colbrand again he ran,
And said "Traitour!" to him than,
"Thou shalt have evil death!
Now ich have of weapons plenté,
Wherewith that I may were[7] me,
Right maugré al thine teeth."

Colbrand, then, with mickle heat,
On Guy's helm he would have smit

[1] Quickly. [2] Hanged. [3] Give. [4] Receive. [5] Death.
[6] Handle, Sax. [7] Defend.

With well great heart-tene;
Ac he failed of his dent,
And the sword into the earth went
A foot and more, I wene.
And, with Colbrand's out-draught,
Sir Guy, with ax, a stroke him raught
A wound that was well seen;
So smartlich he smote Colbrand,
That his right arm, with all his hand,
He struck off quite and clean.
When Colbrand feld him so smite,
He was well wrath, ye may well wite,
He gan his sword up-fond,[2]
And in his left hand up it haf;[3]
And Guy in the neck a stroke him gaf,
As he stooped for the brond,
That his heved from the body he smot,
And into the earth half a foot,
Thorough grace of Godis sond,
Dead he fell'd the glutton there;
The Danes, with sorrow and care,
They dight hem out of lond.

Sir Guy, carried in triumph to Winchester, seemed to take no share in the general exultation. Scarcely was he disarmed, when he demanded his *sclavain*, and departed without deigning to satisfy the curiosity of the nobles or people concerning the name of their gallant deliverer; nor did Athelstan himself obtain a communication of the secret, till he had given a solemn promise not to reveal it before the expiration of twelve months. Sir Guy, careless of wealth and honour, and even indifferent to the caresses of friendship, disengaged himself from the importunate kindness of his sovereign, and proceeded to Warwick.

The disconsolate Felice, during the long interval of his absence, had passed her whole time in acts of devotion or of charity. Her husband, presenting himself at her gate in his pilgrim's weeds, was invited into the hall; was plentifully entertained; and enjoyed the pleasure of witnessing, unknown and unsuspected, her daily observance of those duties to

[1] Grief. [2] *Fond* is, generally, to *attempt:* here it means to *raise with effort*. [3] Hove, heaved.

which he had, long since, devoted the remainder of his life. Unwilling to withdraw her from these salutary pursuits, he again departed unknown, taking with him a single page as an attendant, and retired to a solitary hermitage in the forest of Ardenne, where he was advertised by an angel of his approaching dissolution. He then dispatched his page to Felice with the gold ring which he had received from her at parting, and adjured her to come and give directions for his burial. She arrived; found him dying; received his last breath; and, having survived him only fifteen days, was buried in the same grave.

The author of the romance now thinks, and certainly not without reason, that it is time to take some notice of Heraud. We have left this unfortunate warrior in a dungeon on the coast of Africa; where, during a long series of years, his only occupation or amusement was, to bemoan his present misery, or to relate the stories of his former prowess, without being able to awaken the compassion, or even excite the attention of his gaolers.

But the monarch by whom he was detained in captivity, having incautiously engaged in a war with Aragus, who is already known to the reader as the patron of young Raynburn, was, after many defeats, at length besieged in his capital, and on the point of being forced to surrender. In this extremity, he learned from one of his attendants who had accidentally overheard the complaints of the unfortunate prisoner, that his captive was no other than the illustrious Heraud, the second hero of Christendom. Overjoyed at this intelligence, the king instantly ordered him into his presence, requested the aid of his arm, and offered his freedom as the reward. The offer was accepted; and Heraud, though weakened by abstinence, benumbed by inactivity, and probably not much improved by old age, was no sooner bathed and well fed, than he found himself at once restored to all his former vigour. Being presented with a suit of armour, he springs upon his horse, sallies out against the enemy, oversets all who oppose him, and is on the point of killing Aragus himself, when he is suddenly called upon to defend himself against the terrible Raynburn.

To Herhaud that knight gan sayn,
"Thou old coward, turn again!

Thou shendest[1] my lord with villainy;
Therefore, churl, thou shalt abye!"

Heraud, unused to such reproaches, advances to meet his doughty assailant, and a dreadful combat ensues; during which the old knight, astonished at the weight of Raynburn's blows, repeatedly adjures him to reveal his name. The young hero, fearing that this might be construed as a sign of fear, obstinately refuses; but at length, being won by the modesty and courtesy of his reverend antagonist, consents to an explanation, the result of which is, that the champions rush into each other's arms, and amicably depart together, to the great astonishment of their respective sovereigns, who, being equally unfit for the further conduct of the war, are easily induced to a similar reconciliation.

The preceptor and his pupil, after riding till the approach of night without meeting with any city, town, or village, began to grow impatient for a place of shelter, when they very luckily discovered a castle in the midst of a plain. Here they had the good fortune to meet with a very civil and talkative porter; who, after informing them that the castle belonged to a lady, and that she was in great affliction for the loss of her husband, hastened to her with the information of their arrival, and speedily returned with an order for their instant admission.

Then came squires and servance,
And took their swordes and their lance;
The lady them kept with honour,
And unlaced their armour.
That night they had good rest,
And meat and drink of the best.
"Madam," said Herhaud the bold,
"What hight your lord?" and she him told.
She said "Amys of the mountain;
The best knight of this land, certain.
Here beside, an elvish knight
Hath taken my lord in fight,
And hath him led with him away
Into the Fairy, sir, par ma fey."
"Was Amys," quod Herhaud, "your husband?

[1] Causest ruin to.

A doughtier knight was none in land!"
Then told Herhaud to Raynbron,
How he loved his father Guyon.
Then said Raynburn, "For thy sake
Tomorrow I shall the way take,
And never more come again
Till I bring Amys of the mountain."
Raynburn rose in the morning early,
And armed him full richly.
He said, "Herhaud, here be you;
To fetch Amys I shall go now."
Raynburn rode till it was noon,
Till he came to a rock of stone;
There he found a strong gate;
He blessed him, and rode in thereat,
He rode half a mile the way;
He saw no light that came of day;
Then came he to a water broad,
Never man over such one rode;
Within he saw a place green;
Such one had he never erst seen.
Within that place there was a palace,
Closed with walls of heathenness.
The walls thereof was of crystal,
And the sommers of coral.
Raynburn had great doubt to pass
The water, so deep and broad it was.
And, at the last, his steed did leap
Into the broad water deep.
Thirty fathom he sank down:
Then cleped he to God Raynburn.
God him holpe, his steed was good,
And bare him over that hedeous flood.

Raynburn now dismounts, and after wandering for some time about the palace, finds in a dungeon, a knight, who proves to be Sir Amys; by whom he is informed that the elfish knight is invulnerable by common weapons, and that it is necessary, as a prelude to his success, to possess himself of an enchanted sword, which he will find hanging in the great hall. Raynburn, following these directions, seizes the sword, carries off Sir Amys, is pursued by the elfish knight, whom

he attacks and wounds, and compels to purchase his life by the surrender of all the captives whom he detained in his enchanted palace. Raynburn restores Sir Amys to his lady, and departs with Heraud.

The travellers meet with no further adventures till they arrive in Burgundy, which they find in a state of desolation, in consequence of the repeated incursions of a certain Earl Sany, who, though not very formidable from his own valour, has the good fortune to retain in his service a wonderful knight, only twenty years old, but hitherto invincible. This paragon of chivalry keeps a pass in the mountains; and Raynburn is of course, impatient to try his process. The combat between these youthful rivals for fame is, as might be expected, long and indecisive. Raynburn repeatedly inquires the name of his opponent—

> "Nay," said the knight, "by heaven king
> I shall thee tell nothing
> Till thy head be from thy body!
> For here passed no man, truly,
> But that I slew him in this place:
> So shall I thee, or thou pass!
> And thine old churl also,
> My sword shall bite his neck atwo."

Raynburn, as we have seen, was not very tolerant: the combat therefore recommenced, after this ungracious answer, with redoubled fury; but so equal were the strength and skill of these antagonists that the victory could not be decided. At length Heraud interferes, and advises the young knight to forego the contest, and yield the palm to Raynburn, assuring him that he is equally rich and liberal. The young man then condescends to ask their names, observing, that at the sight and voice of Sir Heraud, he feels an *affray* of which he had never before been conscious. Heraud now, in his turn, refuses, and the young knight consents to speak first. The reader will perhaps hear with some surprise that this was no other than Aslake, Sir Heraud's son, concerning whose birth and education we have no information whatever, and that the *affray* occasioned by the sight of his father was the instinctive voice of filial affection. The young hero falls on his knees, asks forgiveness of his father and of Raynburn, and accom-

panies them to England, where they are all joyfully received by Athelstan.

Now is the story brought to an end,
Of Guy, the bold baron of price,
And of the fair maid Felice,
And of Aslake, and Sir Raynbron.—
Fair ensamples men may lere,
Whoso will listen and hear,
True to love, late and early,
As, in his life, did good Sir Guy:
For he forsook worldly honour,
To serve God his creatour;
Wherefore Jesu, that was of a maid born
To buy man's soul that was forlorn,
And rose from death the third day,
And led man's soul from hell away,
On their souls have mercy!
And ye, that have heard this story,
God give you all his blessing,
And of his grace to your ending;
And joy, and bliss, that ever shall be!
Amen, Amen, for charité!

INTRODUCTION TO SIR BEVIS OF HAMPTOUN.

"CAMDEN," to use the words of Mr. Ritson, "with singular puerility, says that, at the coming in of the Normans, one Bogo, or Beavose, a Saxon, had this title (of Earl of Winchester); who, in the battle of Cardiff in Wales, fought against the Normans. For this, however, in a way too usual with him, he cites no authority; nor does any ancient or veracious historian mention either Bogo, Beavose, or the battle of Cardiff," &c. (Dissert. on Romance and Minstrelsy, p. XCIII.) The critic then makes a violent attack on Mr. Warton, for representing Bevis as a Saxon chieftain; but Warton probably derived his intelligence from Selden, who, in his notes on the Poly-Olbion (canto 2, p. 702 of the 8vo edit.) gives the following account:

"About the Norman invasion was Bevis famous with the title of Earl of Southampton; Duneton in Wiltshire known for his residence.—His sword is kept as a relique in Arundel Castle; not equalling in length (as it is now worn) that of Edward III. at Westminster."

It is unnecessary to say that these notices are not of sufficient authority for considering this romance to be founded on Saxon tradition. It is a translation from the Anglo-Norman.

Sir Bevis, whatever may be his demerits, appears to have enjoyed a high degree of popularity. Three MS. copies of this romance in English verse, are still extant in our public libraries; viz. in the Auchinleck MS. of the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh; in the Public Library, Cambridge; and in that of Caius College. A fourth (Dr. Monro's) was in the possession of the late Dr. Farmer. Of the printed editions, the earliest and most valuable was that of Pynson, of which a copy is possessed by Mr. Douce; two were printed by Copland, and one by East. Those of later date are more numerous.

The following abstract was principally taken from the Caius Coll. MS. the omissions in which have been generally supplied by Pynson's printed copy.

SIR BEVIS.

THE Earls of Southampton, being possessed of territories which it was frequently necessary to defend against foreign invasion, were always distinguished by superior valour and intrepidity; but the most illustrious champion of this warlike house was Sir Guy, father of Sir Bevis whose adventures we are preparing to relate. Sir Guy, constantly occupied during his youth in enterprises undertaken for the security or enlargement of his dominions, had unfortunately never thought of matrimony, till he was past the prime of life, when he chose a wife many years younger than himself, distinguished by her high birth and unrivalled beauty. Our author remarks that such a choice was very imprudent; and as his remarks are not always equally just, we take great pleasure in recording this instance of his sagacity.

In fact, this haughty fair one, who was daughter to the King of Scotland, had long since bestowed her affections on a younger lover, Sir Murdour, brother to the Emperor of Almayne: it was therefore with a very bad grace that she submitted to the positive commands of her father, who preferred to this illustrious son-in-law an alliance with the sturdy Earl of Southampton. She submitted however: she became the mother of Bevis, for whom she never felt a mother's affection; and continued, during eight years, to share the bed of a husband whom she hated, and whose confidence she studied to acquire for the sole purpose of insuring his destruction.

Having matured her project, and gained over to her interests a number of her husband's vassals, she selected a trusty messenger whom she directed to salute her lover on her part,

"And bid him, on the first day,
That cometh in the month of May,
Howso that it be,
That he be with his ferde[1] prest,[2]

[1] Army. [2] Ready.

For to fight in that forest
Upon the sea:
Thider I wol my lord send,
For his love, for to schende,[1]
With little meyné,[2]
And say, that it be nought bileved,[3]
That he ne smyte off his heved,
And send it me."

Sir Murdour returned an answer expressive of the warmest gratitude, and joyfully undertook his share of this atrocious project. He assembled a small troop of armed knights, embarked with them, landed near Southampton, and, taking his station in the forest, patiently waited for his victim. In the mean time the lady appeared to be suddenly indisposed; and, sending for her lord, informed him, that "an evil on her was falle," and that she longed to eat of the flesh of a wild boar from his forest, such food being a sovereign remedy for her disease. Sir Guy, without hesitation, undertook to procure the object of her wishes; and, riding into the forest with his hounds, was soon encompassed by the troops of his treacherous rival, who after bidding him defiance, and avowing his purpose of murder, magnanimously assaulted the defenceless veteran. A few attendants, who had followed their master to the chase, instantly fled in confusion; but the earl himself, though provided only with a simple boar spear, evaded the lance of his antagonist, threw him from his horse upon the ground, and, drawing his trusty sword, defended himself with such skill and courage that a hundred of his assailants successively fell beneath his blows. The victory was long doubtful; but, his horse being killed under him, the knight was at length overpowered by numbers, and kneeling to Sir Murdour, who was now replaced on his horse, earnestly prayed that he might be permitted to seek a more glorious death, and not perish by assassination. His base antagonist replied by a blow which severed the head of the suppliant from his shoulders; and, having fixed it on a spear, sent it to his mistress as the stipulated price of her affection.

Bevis was at this time only seven years old; but so pre-

[1] To ruin or destroy him. [2] Company.
[3] That no delay take place.

mature were his strength and courage, that his unnatural mother considered herself and her lover as insecure during the life of the infant hero. He had been fostered by his paternal uncle, Saber, an honest but irresolute man, of whom she ferociously demanded the murder of her child as the first proof of his allegiance. Saber did not risk a direct refusal, but, having killed a pig, sprinkled the garments of Sir Bevis with the blood, and sent them to the countess as an evidence of his submission; while he disguised his foster son in the habit of a peasant, and enjoined him to tend his flocks on the neighbouring common. He however promised his pupil to retire with him, as soon as possible, into Wales, to the court of an earl to whom they were related, and by whose assistance he might hope, when arrived at maturer age, to regain his patrimony, and to revenge the death of Sir Guy on the adulterous couple by whom his earldom was usurped.

Bevis submitted with patience to the necessary change of dress, and quietly followed his sheep to the downs; from whence he surveyed the palace so lately occupied by his noble father, and vainly endeavoured to suppress the rage and indignation which such an object excited. But when he heard the sounds of minstrelsy, which proclaimed the indecent revelries of his mother and of her base paramour, he was seized with a paroxysm of ungovernable fury, and, forgetting the cautious advice of Saber, precipitately ran to the castle and prepared to make his way into the hall. The porter, calling him "whoreson harlot," attempted to turn him back from the gate; but Bevis, after telling him that he accepted the first epithet, but utterly disclaimed the second, knocked him down, advanced into the hall, and, after a few opprobrious exclamations against his mother and Sir Murdour, applied his cudgel so successfully to the head of the latter, that at the third blow he laid him senseless on the floor. The countess vainly ordered her attendants to seize the traitor; the knights were all benumbed and motionless with astonishment, and suffered the child to retire without opposition.

Bevis, who at seven years of age had knocked down two stout men in one day with his cudgel, was much better satisfied with his adventure than was his uncle Saber, whom he met on his return, and to whom he related thus laconically what had passed:

"I wol thee telle altogedyr;
Beaten I have my step-fadyr
With my mace.
Thrice I smote him on the heved;
Lying in swoon I him by-leaved[1]
On that ilke place."
Saber said, "Thou art to blame;
The lady wol do me shame
All for thy sake!
But thou wilt by counsel do,
Thou might soon bring us two
Into mickle wrake[2]."

But Saber was unable to devise any counsel worth following. Scarcely had he reached his dwelling when the angry countess was announced: and the only contrivance which his ingenuity suggested was, to lock his nephew into an adjoining closet. She reproached him with disobedience of orders; and, having easily confuted all his evasions, ordered him instantly to produce her son, on pain of incurring the most terrible effects of her displeasure. Bevis, who overheard her threats, hastened to show himself; when, calling two of her attendant knights, she ordered them to lead the child to the port, and to sell him as a slave to the captain of any ship who might be preparing to sail into Heathenness. These instructions were punctually executed; and Bevis, after a long but prosperous voyage, was carried to the court of Ermyn, a Saracen king, of whose dominions our author has neglected to ascertain the boundaries, though he has described, pretty accurately, the state of his family.

His wife was dead that hight Marage;
He had a daughter of young age,
Josyan that maiden hete[3];
The shoon[4] were gold upon her feet.
So white she was, and fair of mood,
So is the snow on red blood,
Wherto should I that maid descrive?
She was the fairest thing on-live;
She was so hend, and so well ytaught;
But of Christian law ne couth she nought.

[1] Left. [2] Mischief.—At this place the author abandons the stanza measure, and relates the rest of the story in couplets. [3] Was called. [4] Shoes.

Ermyn beheld with astonishment the strength and beauty of young Bevis; and, having questioned him concerning his country and parentage, was much delighted with the simplicity and conciseness of his answers. He declared it as his opinion, and even confirmed the declaration by an oath, that a child who was so adroit with his cudgel could not fail of possessing unusual prowess when of age to wield a sword; for which reason he, at the instant, proposed to the boy the hand of his daughter Josyan, together with the succession to the crown, on condition of his renouncing Christianity. Bevis, who had been inspired with a strong veneration for his religion, and felt no immediate want of a wife, rejected the offer without hesitation, at the same time expressing rather freely his contempt for the Saracen deities. Fortunately, Ermyn was disposed to be pleased, and took this freedom in good part:

> And said, "Whiles thou art a swain,
> Thou shalt be my chamberlain;
> And, when thou art dubbed a knight,
> My banner thou shalt bear in fight."

Bevis gratefully accepted these offers, and continued, during seven years, to make a progress in the affections of the Saracen monarch, as well as in those of the beautiful Josyan.

The first exploit of our hero was of a very disagreeable nature. He was now fifteen years old, and considered by all Ermyn's subjects as a miracle of strength and beauty. On Christmas day, he happened to be riding out in company with sixty Saracen knights, one of whom asked him if he was aware what day it was. Bevis replying that he did not know, the other assured him that it was the festival of Christ's nativity; and a second knight added, that it could not but scandalize them, who were accustomed to treat their gods with due reverence, to observe his inattention to his most sacred duties. Bevis answered, that having been sold as a slave at seven years old, and since that time surrounded by Heathens, he had no means of information respecting the religious observances attached to his faith; but that if he were then a knight, as his father had been, and properly armed, he would, in honour of the true God, readily undertake to just with the whole company; and trusted that, in such a cause, he could

unhorse them all, one after the other. The Saracen knights, incensed at this speech from a young page, instantly determined to punish his insolence; and being all armed with swords, wounded him very severely before he had the means of making any defence. But at length, having wrested a sword from the hand of one of his assailants, he exerted himself so successfully as to kill them all. The horses ran home to the stables, and excited a general curiosity respecting the fate of their riders; while Bevis, fatigued with his exploit, and smarting under his wounds, followed at his leisure, tied up his horse, retired into his own room, and throwing himself on the floor, prepared to wait as patiently as he could till it should please Heaven to diminish the pain which he then suffered.

Ermyn, though long trained to the use of power, had always been accustomed to dispense with the trouble of reflection. He generally acted from the first impulse, and this impulse was, at present, unfavourable to his young chamberlain. It was observed to him, that there would be no end of dubbing knights for the purpose of seeing them killed by Bevis; it was evidently shorter to put him to death; and therefore Ermyn resolved on ordering Bevis to immediate execution. But Josyan having advised that he should exert his royal sagacity in examining the culprit, he came over to this opinion; and the princess, who wished for some previous conversation with her favourite, dispatched two of her knights with orders that they should conduct Bevis into her presence.

He was still lying on the floor, in great pain, and very much out of humour; insomuch that, having barely raised his head on the arrival of the two knights, he told them, that were it not for the respect he bore to the sacred character of messengers, he should have punished with instant death their impertinent intrusion; and added

> I ne will gon a foot on ground,
> To speaken with an heathen hound!

At the same time his eyes flashed with indignation; and the frightened knights, thinking that they saw around him the ghosts of their sixty countrymen, hastened back with this very uncourteous message to Josyan, who only smiled at their terrors, and, promising to be their safeguard, returned with them to Bevis.

Josyan cast her arms abouten his swere[1];
On her he made a lothly cheer.
She kist him on mouth and on chin,
And began to comfort him.
He said, "Mercy, Josyan, thine ore[2]!
I am wounded swithe sore."
"Sweet leman," she said, in hast,
"I am a leech with the best!
No better salve I understond
Ne is in all Paynim lond,
Than I have brought with me;
And I wol thy warrant be!"

But before she undertook the cure, it was necessary that she should conduct him to her father; in whose presence he related, with his usual simplicity, the whole adventure; and such was the effect of his eloquence, or rather of his pallid countenance and almost numberless wounds, that Ermyn burst into tears, and expressly commanded his daughter to exert all her leech-craft in his behalf. Josyan very willingly re-conducted her patient to his chamber,

There they kisseden hem full oft,
And she healed him swythe soft.
So, within a little stound,
He was both whole and sound;
And all so fierce for to fight
So is the falcon to the flight.

Thus ended this perilous adventure: and the minstrel, unwilling to attempt too rashly the narration of another equally terrible, here interposes the following admonitory couplet—

For the time that God made,
Fill the cup and make us glad.

There was in the royal forest a wild boar, who had long been the terror of Ermyn's court. His size was enormous, his hide so thick as to be invulnerable, and his tusks so sharp that no common armour could withstand them; besides which, he was distinguished from other boars by a contemptuous disregard for beech-mast and acorns, and by an unnatural predilection for human flesh, which he gratified at the

[1] Neck. [2] Grace, favour.

expense of all those who ventured to attack him. Bevis, finding his strength restored, began to consider of the best modes of employing it; and, one night, whilst he lay in bed, luckily bethought himself of the boar. In the morning he saddled his horse; took a good shield and spear, together with an excellent sword; spurred across the plain with a grace which further captivated the fair Josyan, who beheld him from her window; and, when arrived at the forest, dismounted, tied his horse to a tree, and began to blow his horn. The boar, whether from sleepiness, or from a natural indifference to such music, took no notice of the defiance; and Sir Bevis, constantly advancing, blowing his horn, and searching every thicket, began to despair of meeting his enemy, when he was directed to the animal's den by the human bones with which the road was almost wholly covered. He then thus tauntingly addressed his antagonist:

"Rise," he said, "thou foul beast,
And against me batayle thou hast!"
When the boar of Bevis had an eye,
He set his bristles all on high;
He stared with his eyen hollow,
Right as Bevis he would swallow;
"Of thee," said Bevis, "I have mervail!
Well have I set my travail."

The hunting-spear which our hero had chosen for this occasion was of unusual strength, but it was shivered at the very first onset. The sword was, fortunately, so well tempered that it did not break in his hand; but he soon perceived that it made no more impression on the boar than it would have done on a rock of marble. But his ineffectual exertions were very fatiguing; his situation became every moment more discouraging; and in a short prayer, which he uttered with great devotion, the fainting hero confessed that he had no hopes of success but from the merciful interposition of heaven. During this time his antagonist, whose temper was naturally choleric, and perhaps rendered more so by the inflammatory nature of his favourite food, began to be in his turn much distressed by the effects of his own impetuosity; and, being unable to reach his too nimble enemy, became almost blind with fury, and breathless from exhaustion.

Bevis, perceiving that the panting animal was unable to close his jaws without risk of suffocation, instantly seized this advantage; and, when the boar attempted to regain his den, met him in his full career, and plunged the sword down his throat. This blow was decisive. The hero, who from his long education in a royal court was an adept in carving, now severed the head from the body; and, placing it on the truncheon of his spear, bore it off in triumph.

During the life of this boar, the keepers of the royal forest never ventured to go their rounds except in complete armour, and in numerous companies. Twelve of these happening to meet Bevis on his return, and perceiving that he was quite unarmed (his sword having been accidentally left with the body of the animal), resolved to wrest from him the fruits of his victory. He had just emerged from the forest, and arrived within sight of the tender Josyan, who from her tower had been anxiously watching for his return, when he was suddenly assailed by the company of twelve armed foresters. But, though armed, they were not invulnerable; and the truncheon of a spear was by no means an inefficient weapon in the hands of Bevis. At the first blow it came into contact with the helmets of three of these assailants, and scattered their brains to some distance. A second stroke and a third were repeated with equal success; and the three survivors having made a timely retreat, Bevis quietly resumed the boar's head, and pursued his journey to the palace; where Ermyn, who had already learned from his daughter the news of this astonishing adventure, received him with open arms, and recommended him to all his courtiers as a perfect model of courtesy and valour.

Soon after this, an embassy was received from Bradmond, king of Damascus, whereby that monach signified his wish of espousing the fair Josyan, at the same time announcing, that a refusal of the princess's hand would excite great indignation in the breast of the aforesaid Bradmond, and induce him to waste with fire and sword the whole territory of Ermyn. This mode of courtship, it must be confessed, was not conciliatory. Ermyn was so furiously incensed, that, after having summoned his barons, he was unable to explain very intelligibly the cause of his indignation; but they took it for granted, and collected their quotas of men, which, when

united, amounted to twenty thousand. Josyan now represented to her father, that he would do well to confer the honour of knighthood on the invincible Bevis, whose single person was worth at least half a dozen armies; and her advice being implicitly followed, the young general prepared for the battle.

Bevis did on his acquetoun,[1]
That had aughted[2] many a town;
A hauberk Josyan him brought,
Soothly a better was never y-wrought.
A helm she gave him, good and fair,
There might no thing it apayre.
Then gave him that fair may[4]
A good sword that hight MORGLAY:
There was no better under the sun;
Many a land therewith was won.
Josyan gave him, siththen, a steed,
The best that ever on ground yede;
Full well I can his name tell;
Men called him ARUNDEL.
There was no horse in the world so strong
That might him follow a furlong.
Bevis in the saddle 'light;
Josyan smiled that was so bright.
Bevis gan his horn to blow,
That his host should him know, &c.

Bradmond trusted very much to the hitherto unrivalled strength of his standard-bearer, the giant Radyson, and not less to the vast superiority of his numbers; insomuch that, when he discovered Bevis advancing at the head of his small troop, he thought it quite comical, and could not refrain from an immoderate fit of laughter. The battle began by distinct skirmishing;

But when that they had broke the 'ray,
Fierce and mortal was that fray!

Bevis began by driving his spear through the huge body

[1] A wadded or quilted waistcoat worn under the coat of mail, but often taken for the coat of mail itself. See Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 16.
[2] Cost. [3] Impair, hurt, lessen in value. [4] Maid.

of Radyson; after which he made a course of experiments to try the temper of his sword Morglay, and thinned the ranks of the enemy with such astonishing expedition, that Bradmond, quite cured of his mirth, thought only of securing his retreat, and of carrying off two of Ermyn's knights, his prisoners, whom he had taken in the beginning of the action. But in this also he failed. Bevis, borne with the rapidity of lightning by the incomparable Arundel, quickly overtook the fugitive, felled him together with his horse at one blow to the ground, recovered the prisoners, and signified to his prostrate enemy that he could only obtain permission to live, by taking a solemn oath of allegiance and fealty to the once despised Ermyn. Bradmond thought this condition very severe, but frankly confessed that he thought the loss of life still more disagreeable; and, having repeated the formula which constituted him the vassal of King Ermyn, was suffered to depart.

The conqueror being returned to court, and having simply and modestly related his success, and the important consequences which it secured, was received with transports of gratitude by the king, who immediately ordered his daughter to disarm the hero, to clothe him in a magnificent robe, and to serve him while at table.

Then was Josyan right glad,
And to her chamber she him ladde.
She set him soft upon a bed,
Boards[1] were laid and cloths spread.
When she had unarmed Bevis,
To the board she him led y-wis,
And made him well at ease and fine,
With rich meat and noble wine.
When that they hadde well eaten,
And on her bed together sitten,
Josyan, that was so true,
Thought she would her love renew.
She said, "Bevis, lemman[2], thine ore!
Than I can tell I love thee more.
Certes, Bevis, but thou me rede,
For pure love I shall be dead!"

[1] Tables. [2] Sweetheart; love.

Then said Bevis, "Josyan, be still;
Thou speakest all against skill.[1]
Thou mightest have one allunlyche,[2]
King Bradmond that is so ryche.
In all the world is no man,
Prince, king, ne soudan,
But they would have thee to queen,
Gif they hadde thee once seen.
I am a knight of strange land,
I have no more than I in stand."
"Mercy! Bevis," said Josyan,
"I had thee liever to my lemman,
Thy body in thy shirt all naked,[3]
Than all the good that Mahoun maked.
Bevis," she said, "tell me thy thought!"
Bevis sat still, and spake right nought;
She fell down and wepte sore;
She said, "Thou saydest here before,
There is no king that me hath seen,
But that he would have me to queen;
And thou disdainest of me so?
See thou out of my chamber go:
More comely it were thee like
For to hedge, and make a dyke,
Than thus to be dubbed a knight,
And to sit among maidens bright.
Go, churl! out of my fare,[4]
And Mahoun give thee mickle care!"
"Damsel," he said, "I am no churl;
My father was both knight and earl;
Unto my country I will me hie."

The dispute having now degenerated into a formal quarrel, Bevis returned to the lady all her presents, and, bidding her an eternal farewell, retired to his chamber; while she, supported by the feelings of injured pride, made no effort to detain him. But no sooner was she left alone, than she began to lament most bitterly her foolish precipitation. She had a favourite and confidential chamberlain, named Boniface, whom she im-

[1] Reason. [2] Exclusively. [3] It was formerly unusual to sleep with any night-linen on. [4] Way.

mediately dispatched to her lover with a most penitential message, conjuring him to return, and promising to make ample amends for the indiscreet words into which her passion had betrayed her. But the knight, after bestowing on her messenger a magnificent present, sturdily declared that he would not stir a step in quest of her apology: and the tender Josyan, anxious to procure an immediate reconciliation, hastened to the apartment of her lover, met his ill-humour with the most winning complaisance, and finally forced from him the avowal of a mutual passion.

"Mercy," she said, "my lemman sweet!
(She fell down and gan to weep).
"Forgive me that I have mis-said,
I will that ye be well apayed!
My false gods I will forsake,
And Christendom for thy love take."
"On that covenant," said Sir Bevis than,
"I will thee love, fair Josyan!"

Bevis, it seems, had endured a long struggle beween his affection and his piety; and though his heart had always done justice to the incomparable charms of Josyan, the reflection that those charms belonged to a *heathen hound* had constantly checked his passion. That obstacle was now removed; and the happy couple, during a very long interview, gave way to the delight which both derived from their reconciliation, perfectly unconscious that the severest calamity which had ever menaced them was now impending, and would produce a long interruption of their happiness.

It will be remembered that Sir Bevis, in the late action, had liberated two knights captured by Bradmond. Not content with saving them from captivity, he carried them to his own apartment, entertained them magnificently, and admitted them to the most intimate familiarity. They had thus an opportunity of witnessing the interview between Bevis and Josyan; and, hastening to the king, informed him that his daughter was become a renegade, and was preparing to form an indissoluble connection with the Christian knight, the enemy of his majesty's holy religion.

Ermyn was much disturbed by this intelligence. The crime was such as he could not pardon; yet it was neither honour-

able nor safe to attempt the public punishment of Sir Bevis. But the treacherous knights presently removed this difficulty by proposing that a letter should be written to King Bradmond, charging him on his allegiance to secure the person of his Christian rival, and that Sir Bevis should himself be the bearer of this letter. The nefarious project was immediately executed; and the knight readily accepted the embassy, only expressing his wish to take with him his good horse and sword, for the purpose of securing himself against the probable treachery of Bradmond. But this proposal was overruled by Ermyn, who observed, that such precautions were contrary to all usage, and that the sacred character with which he was invested was his best protection: he added,

> "And, Bevis, thou shalt unto me swear,
> That thou wilt truly my letters bear,
> And, as thou art true man lief,
> Not undo the print of my brief."[1]

The young envoy, without considering that sealed credèntials were much more contrary to usage than the precautions which he had desired to adopt, took the oath without hesitation, and departed, full of confidence, on his disastrous mission.

Bevis was seldom provident. Much of his journey lay through an uninhabited country, yet had he taken no measures for his subsistence; so that, after travelling three days with all the speed that his *ambling hackney* could exert, he found himself very sleepy and hungry. He then lay down to rest during a few hours, and, awaking with a keener appetite than before, pursued his way through the forest, where he had the good fortune to discover a palmer seated at his dinner, which consisted of a plentiful store of good bread and wine, together with the unusual luxury of *three baked curlews*. The pilgrim, perceiving that the stranger was a knight, *vailed his bonnet* to him, and respectfully entreated him to share his humble repast; to which Bevis thankfully consented, and after a plentiful meal, entered into a conversation with his kind entertainer. He now discovered that this palmer, whose name was Terry, was the son of his uncle and foster-father Saber. That good man, unwilling to bear the tyranny of Sir Murdour and his wicked wife, had retreated to the Isle of

[1] Break not the seal of my letter.

Wight; and, finding the inhabitants full of loyalty to the son of the deceased earl, had, with their assistance, defended the island against all the forces which the usurper could bring against him. But as the presence of Bevis was necessary to authorize any offensive measures, he had dispatched his son Terry, under the disguise of a palmer, into *Heathenness*, with orders to discover his lord, and bring him back to the assistance of his subjects. Bevis, unwilling to discover himself, professed to be the confidential friend of the young earl, to whom he promised to relate this important intelligence so soon as he should have finished the business of his present embassy, and directed Terry to return to Saber with assurances of a speedy succour. They now separated, and Bevis pursued his journey towards Damascus.

The description of this famous city seems to deserve insertion.

There was King Bradmond's palace,
Was never none richer the story says:
For all the windows and the walls
Were painted with gold, both towers and halls;
Pillars and doors all were of brass;
Windows of latten[1] were set with glass:
It was so rich in many wise,
That it was like a paradise;
About the palace there was a dyke,
In brede[2] and deepness there was none like;
Over the dyke a bridge there lay,
That man and beast might pass away:
Under the bridge were sixty bells,
Right as the romance tells,
That there might no man pass in
But all they rang with a gin.[3]
At the bridge end stood a tower,
Painted with gold and with azure:
Rich it was to behold;
Thereon stood an eagle of gold;
His eyen were of precious stones,
Of great virtue for the nonce;

[1] A mixed metal of the colour of brass.—The old dramatists allude to it in many a quibble. [2] Breadth. [3] By a mechanical contrivance.

The stones were so rich and bright
That all the palace shone of light.

Bevis had never before seen so much magnificence; but he was too impatient to lose time in satisfying his curiosity: he passed on, and presently found himself entangled in a crowd of Saracens, who were preparing a sacrifice to an idol representing Mahomet. This offensive sight suspended in his mind all recollection of his business at Damascus; he pressed through the multitude, forced his way to the idol, seized it by its golden crown, and threw it into the dirt, desiring the people to go and help a god who was now evidently incapable of helping them. The sudden act of sacrilege raised a general cry of indignation against the insolent stranger, and a thousand hands were at once raised to seize him; but Bevis, though deprived of Morglay, had by his side a common sword, and began forthwith to cut off the heads of his assailants with a dexterity which was truly marvellous. The crowd ran with precipitation towards the palace, followed by the ambassador, who continued his operations till he reached the king's presence; when, dropping on his knees, he delivered his credentials, accompanying them with an oration expressive of his contempt for his majesty's sacred person, and for the believers in Mahomet of all ranks and conditions.

Bradmond, taking the letter, ordered a *clerk* to read it, and heard its contents with equal surprise and pleasure. After reproaching Bevis with his unprovoked attack on the people of Damascus, and on the wooden Mahomet, whose vengeance had so suddenly overtaken him, the king held a short council, and then ordered that the knight should be seized, and confined in a deep dungeon inhabited only by two dragons, who were in the habit of devouring their fellow-prisoners; and at the same time he remarked to the culprit, that the generous and grateful Ermyn, for whom he had gained, at the risk of his life, a decisive victory, was the real author of this sentence. Sir Bevis resisted as long as he could, and destroyed a considerable number of his enemies, when his sword broke in his hand, and he was at length secured, his arms being tied behind him with such violence that the blood burst forth from his fingers' ends. He was now conducted into the great hall of the palace, placed in a knight's stall, and fed, with much appearance of ceremony, by a Saracen knight, the king at the

same time recommending him to eat with a good appetite, as he now saw before him the last luxuries of which he would ever taste. He was next lowered into the dungeon, where his hands were unbound, and he was left to defend himself as well as he could against the two dragons, who shortly after made their appearance and attacked him: but, having luckily found the truncheon of a staff, he fought the monsters during a whole day and night, and ultimately destroyed them; after which he devoutly returned thanks to Heaven for his victory. Some wheatbran was daily let down into the dungeon for his support: but neither meat nor corn was allowed to him; and

> Rats and mice, and such small deer,[1]
> Was his meat that seven year.

While Bevis was languishing in this miserable captivity, the tender Josyan was in a situation scarcely less pitiable. To her inquiries concerning Sir Bevis, Ermyn answered, that he was returned to England and married to a lady of high distinction; and to the grief occasioned by this calumny, which though she did not quite believe she could not disprove, were added the persecutions of a new lover. Inor, king of Mounbraunt, an empire quite unknown to modern geographers, applied for, and obtained from her father, the promise of her hand; and, however unwilling to justify, by her own conduct, the supposed infidelity of Sir Bevis, she was compelled to marry a man whose person she hated, and whose religion she had secretly abjured. She had, however, in reserve, a notable contrivance for preserving her chastity inviolate.

> "I shall go make me a writ,
> Thorough a clerk wise of wit,
> That there shall no man have grace,
> While that letter is in place,
> Against my will to lie me by,
> Nor do me shame nor villany."
> She did that letter soon be wrought,
> On the manner as she had thought;
> About her neck she hanged it;
> She would not beguile Bevis yet.

Thus armed, she submitted to the marriage contract in

[1] Any sort of untamed animals. These lines are quoted in King Lear.

presence of the king of Babylon and of the soudan of Persia, and departed with her husband towards his dominions. Inor had received from Ermyn, amongst other presents, the good sword Morglay and the good steed Arundel, whom he determined to mount on the day of his triumphal entry: but scarcely was he seated in the saddle, when Arundel, perceiving some little symptoms of awkwardness in his new rider, scampered off with him; and, followed by the whole court, who were unwilling to abandon their sovereign, performed so many evolutions amongst the bushes and briers, and so completely disordered the seat of the too presuming bridegroom, that a sudden plunge threw him upon his back with a degree of violence by which the spine was nearly dislocated. Inor was long confined to his bed; and Arundel, strongly suspected by the grooms of some treasonable design on his majesty's life, would have been starved in the stable, but for the charitable donations of corn which were administered to him by the attention of Josyan.

During the seven years of his imprisonment, Bevis had made so great a proficiency in the Christian virtues, as to deserve to receive a visit from an angel, who condescended to cure him of a wound inflicted by an adder in crawling over him. Encouraged by this miraculous event, he began to pray to Heaven with increased fervour for his deliverance out of the dungeon; when the tremulous tones of his voice attracted the attention of his two gaolers, who, encouraged by his apparent weakness, determined to murder him. The first who descended made a blow at him with his sword, which felled him to the ground; but Bevis, soon rising, returned the compliment with his fist and killed the assailant; then assuming a feigned voice, he easily decoyed down the other assassin, whom he instantly dispatched with the sword of his companion. But the victory had nearly proved fatal to the victor. With his gaolers died all hopes of his daily allowance of food; but, after three days of dreadful abstinence, his steadfast piety was rewarded by a new miracle. The massive chain, by which his middle was fastened to the rock of his dungeon, suddenly gave way; he fell on his knees to thank Heaven for his deliverance; and, seizing the rope by which the gaolers had descended, easily gained the surface of the pit in which he had been so long entombed

This escape took place rather before the dawn of day; and he soon heard sounds of merriment proceeding from the royal stables, where the grooms were dressing the king's war-horses. Through a hole in the wall he then discovered a pile of armour, and, bursting open the door with a kick of his foot, found little difficulty in killing a dozen of wretches, whom his cadaverous appearance, and his long hair which trailed upon the ground, had rendered stupid with astonishment. He then armed himself at his leisure; saddled and mounted the best horse in the stable, galloped to the palace gates, and, loudly taxing the porter with negligence for suffering Sir Bevis to escape from prison, commanded the draw-bridge to be instantly lowered; was obeyed without hesitation, set spurs to his horse, and galloped off into the neighbouring forest. Here, however, he soon lost his way, and, after riding till the approach of night, was so overcome by sleep, that he was obliged to dismount and lie down to rest at a short distance from the city which he had quitted in the morning.

In the mean time, the gaolers being missed, and the dungeon searched, the news of Sir Bevis's escape was conveyed to the king, who collecting all his knights, immediately set off in pursuit of the fugitive. The most formidable of these knights was Sir Graundere, the proprietor of a valuable horse named Trenchefys; and such was the speed of this courser, that he overtook Sir Bevis, who had at length discovered the right road; whilst the king and his other vassals, though well mounted, had scarcely advanced a few miles in their pursuit. Bevis, thus compelled to defend himself, turned upon his adversary, pierced him through the heart with the first thrust of his spear, took possession of Trenchefys, and continued his flight; but, having again mistaken his way, he at length came in sight of the *sea*, constantly followed by King Bradmond and his army of knights. In this desperate situation our hero, recommending himself to God, spurred his steed into the water, and the indefatigable Trenchefys swam with him to the opposite shore.

So much, however, was he enfeebled by want of food, that when his horse, on reaching the dry ground, began to shake himself, he fell out of the saddle; but speedily remounted, and continuing his journey, soon arrived at a fair castle, on the walls of which stood a lady, whom he eagerly besought, for

the love of God, to give him a *meal's meat*. The lady answered, that her lord was a giant and an infidel, and therefore conjured the Christian stranger to seek a more hospitable mansion. But Bevis was inflexible; he declared that having no wish to die of hunger, he was resolved to dine in that castle, either as a guest or by force. This being announced to the giant, he seized an iron door-bar in his hand, and thus addressed Sir Bevis:

"What art thou, Sir Nyse?[1]
Where stalest thou Trenchefyse
That thou sittest upon here?
He was my brother's, Sir Graundere."
"God wot," then said Bevis,
"I shofe[2] Sir Graundere a crown, y-wis,
When we last met in bataile;
I made him deacon, without fail;
And, if thou wilt orders take,
A priest," said Bevis, "I shall thee make."

This elegant conversation ended by a terrible combat. The giant aimed a blow at his adversary, which missed the rider, but killed the unfortunate Trenchefys; he also threw a javelin with such force and skill that it transfixed the shoulder of Sir Bevis, who, however, revenged himself by cutting off the giant's head; and rushed into the castle, still calling on the lady for something to eat. She instantly set before him a plentiful dinner, which he dispatched with much rapidity, after ordering her, in the first instance, to taste of every dish and of every kind of wine which was successively set before him. She then with a kerchief bound up his wound, and stopped the effusion of blood; after which he felt such an impatience to be gone, that he instantly ordered out the giant's best horse, and

Into the saddle so he lept
That on no stirrup he ne stept.

He now ardently wished, whilst he rode over a beautiful green plain, that he could meet King Bradmond's army, and cut it in pieces to accelerate his digestion; but, as no army happened to meet him, he continued his journey to Jerusalem, where he confessed his sins to the patriarch, and received his

[1] Foolish. A. N. [2] Shaved.

absolution, accompanied by a strict injunction that he should never unite himself in matrimony with any but a *clean maid;* an injunction, to which the penitent readily promised a constant obedience.

On quitting Jerusalem, his wishes naturally led him to take the road to Ermony; but he had not advanced far, when he met a gentle knight, who had been in his service at the court of King Ermyn, and who related to him all the circumstances of Josyan's marriage to Inor, king of Mounbraunt. To this country, therefore, he pointed his steps, after receiving from the knight an exact description of the road: and, having reached the principal city, determined to enter it in disguise; for which purpose he exchanged dresses with a poor palmer. The king, he was told, was then hunting, but the queen was in her tower; to this tower therefore he proceeded. At the gate stood a crowd of pilgrims, waiting for their share of the food which the charitable Josyan was in the habit of daily distributing to poor Christians; but as the hour of dinner was not arrived, Sir Bevis proceeded to examine the exterior of the palace, and had the satisfaction, in passing under the windows of her turret, to hear the voice of his mistress, who was praying to Heaven with great fervency; and he was sufficiently near to distinguish that he was not forgotten in her devotions. He then returned to the gate; was welcomed by her as an indigent stranger; was placed by her *at the head of the board*, plentifully fed, and was then requested to relate whether, in the course of his travels, he had ever seen or heard of Sir Bevis. He professed to be the most intimate friend of that knight, by whom he had been sent into various countries in search of a steed called Arundel. The queen, on this assurance, led the disguised stranger to Arundel's stable; and that faithful horse no sooner heard the voice of his master, than he burst asunder *seven chains* by which he was fastened to the stall, and ran out of the stable door. She now expressed her fears lest the mischievous animal should escape, and throw the whole town into consternation; but Bevis laughing at her fears, approached the steed, who seemed to expect with anxiety the commands of his well-known rider.

> Bevis himself in the saddle threw,
> And thereby Josyan anon him knew.

She said, "Bevis, my lemman dear,
Ride not fro me in no manere!
Thou promised me for wife to take,
When I my false gods did forsake:
Help me, Bevis, now at this need;
For thou hast Arundel thine own steed;
I shall thee fetch thy sword Morglay;
And lead me, Bevis, with thee away!"
Sir Bevis answered, "By Saint Jame,
If I thee love I were to blame!
For thee I lay in prison strong
Seven year, and that was long!
Also the patriarch, on my life,
Charged me never to take wife
But if she were a maiden clean;
And seven year hast thou been queen,
And every night a knight by thee:
How shouldest thou then a maiden be?"
"Mercy, Sir Bevis," then said she,
"Have me home to thy countré:
But ye find me a true woman,
In all that ever ye say can,
Send me hither to my foe,
Myself naked, and no mo!"
"I grant," said Bevis, "that thou with me go,
On that covenant that it be so.
Hie[1] the fast, and make thee prest,[2]
If that thou with me go lest."[3]

It will be remembered that Josyan had a confidential chamberlain named Boniface. This prudent personage was fortunately present during this conversation, and, whilst his mistress was gone in search of the sword, stated to Sir Bevis the danger of such a hurried departure, and suggested to him a much more rational project. "The king," said he, "is now hunting in the forest, but he will return immediately. Should you carry off the queen thus publicly, you will meet with obstacles on every side, and be closely pursued. But take my advice:—Your disguise conceals you effectually; the king will notice you as a traveller, and naturally ask you for news.

[1] Hasten. [2] Ready. [3] List, chose.

Tell him that you are just come from Syria; that Bradwin, who is his brother, has been totally defeated by King Syrak; that the avenues to the country are possessed by the enemy, and all means of sending intelligence of his situation effectually cut off. The king will instantly hasten, with all his forces, to the relief of his brother; and during his absence we may take our measures at our leisure, and escape with perfect security." Bevis was convinced by this reasoning; led back Arundel to the stable; and, having told his story to the king, had the satisfaction to see him depart on the next day for Syria.

The city of Mounbraunt was, in the mean time, committed to the care of the king's steward, named Sir Grassy, an active and vigilant officer: but Boniface contrived to give him a sleeping-potion; during the operation of which Sir Bevis, arrayed in the best armour which the king's treasury could furnish, accompanied by Josyan on the peerless Arundel, and attended by the trusty Boniface, departed without meeting any opposition from the inhabitants of Mounbraunt. The governor indeed awaked at last, issued his orders for stopping the fugitives on the frontier, and followed them into a forest, where Sir Bevis, having reconnoitred the army of his pursuers, felt a great desire to amuse his mistress by killing a few thousands of them with his good sword Morglay; but Josyan insisted on taking refuge in a cave which was pointed out to her by the sagacious Boniface, and where they effectually disappointed all the measures taken by the governor for their discovery.

But Josyan, after a strict abstinence of twenty-four hours, began to feel herself very hungry; and Sir Bevis, leaving her in the cave with Boniface, undertook to kill some venison for her support. During his absence, two huge lions came into the cave; and Boniface, who, in addition to his other merits, had great dispositions to heroism, valiantly attacked them; but in spite of his efforts the lions proceeded to devour him and his horse: and

> When they had eaten of that man,
> They went both unto Josyan,
> And laid their heads upon her barme:[1]
> But they would do her no harme;

[1] Lap.

For it is the lion's kind,[1] y-wis,
A king's daughter that maid is
Hurt nor harme none to do:
Therefore lay these lions so.

Bevis on his return found Josyan perfectly familiarised with the lions, whom however she could not forgive for eating her chamberlain: she therefore proposed to hold one of them by the neck whilst her lover attacked the other: but he insisted on fighting the two together; and such was the comfort which he derived from the presence of his mistress, and from the conviction of her perfect chastity, that he cut off both their heads at one stroke. The lovers now dined, and, after duly bewailing the loss of the faithful Boniface, mounted on Arundel and pursued their journey.

They had not proceeded far when they met a most portentous and formidable giant, with whom the reader will soon become better acquainted, and whom we will therefore permit the author to describe:

This geaunt was mighty and strong,
And full thirty foot was long.
He was bristled like a sow;
A foot he had between each brow;
His lips were great, and hung aside;
His eyen were hollow; his mouth was wide:
Lothy he was to look on than,
And liker a devil than a man.
His staff was a young oak,
Hard and heavy was his stroke.
Bevis wondred on him right,
And him inquired what he hight?
And if all the men in his cuntree
Were as mighty and great as he?
"My name," he said, "is Ascapard;
Sir Grassy sent me hitherward
For to bring you home again."

But this could not be accomplished without a battle; and such was the activity of Sir Bevis, that Ascapard was never once able to touch him, while he himself was covered with wounds from head to food, and at length fell down, after

[1] Nature.

aiming a terrible but ineffectual blow at his adversary, quite exhausted with fatigue and loss of blood. His life was spared, at the particular intercession of Josyan, and the unwiedly monster became, from this time, the page of Sir Bevis.

After this accession to their household, the lovers proceeded till they reached the sea, where they found a dromound (merchant-ship) ready to sail for Germany, but already occupied by some Saracens, who refused to admit Sir Bevis and his companions into their vessel. Ascapard immediately drove them all out; took up Arundel with Bevis and Josyan under his arm; embarked with them; and, drawing up the sail, arrived, after a prosperous voyage, at Cologne.

The bishop of Cologne happened to be the brother of Sir Guy and Sir Saber, and consequently the uncle of Sir Bevis, whom therefore the good prelate received with every mark of affection. Having inquired the names of the beautiful lady and ugly giant, his travelling companions, he learnt from his nephew their former adventures, and Josyan's earnest desire to be solemnly christened; to which Sir Bevis added, that he should be glad if his unwieldy page could be cleansed from his pagan propensities on the same occasion. Accordingly,

> The bishop christened Josyan,
> That was white as any swan.
> For Ascapard was made a tun;
> And when he should therein be done,
> He lept out upon the brench,[1]
> And said, "Churl! wilt thou me drench?[2]
> The devil of hell mot fetche thee!
> I am too much[3] christened to be!"

The author adds, that this indecent spectacle, though it sorely grieved the bishop, afforded infinite amusement to the good people of Cologne.

It was near this city that Sir Bevis had the honour to achieve the most perilous adventure of his whole life: it is true that

> ——— Sir Launcelot du Lake
> Fought with the brenning drake;[4]

[1] Brink. [2] Drown. [3] Too big.
[4] Burning dragon. See an account of this adventure in Malory's Morte Arthur, lib. xi. cap. i.

Guy of Warwick, I understand,
Slew a dragon in Northumberland;
But such a dragon was never seen
As Sir Bevis slew, I wene.

It seems that there had been two of these monsters in Calabria, who completely ravaged that country, but were at length expelled by the prayers of a holy man. They then flew to Tuscany, and thence to Lombardy where they separated. The one flew to the court of Rome; but in that land of devotion became immoveable.

Men say he is there yit,
Enclosed round with clerkes' wit.

The other came to the territory of Cologne; and Sir Bevis, moved with compassion by the groans of a knight who had been touched by the poison of this monster, determined to attack him, though assured by all the inhabitants of the country that no one but St. Michael was able to maintain a contest with such a serpent.

Ascapard, in the first instance, readily undertook to attend his master on this occasion; but the mere dissonance of the dragon's voice, which he heard at a great distance, had such an effect on his ears, that he declared his resolution to return, avowing that he would not undertake, "for all the realms of heathenness," to look into the throat from which such a voice had issued. Sir Bevis therefore was left alone: yet he proceeded, in spite of the monster's hideous yell, to attack him with his good sword Morglay; and, though the first lash of the dragon's tail broke one of his ribs and felled him to the ground, whilst his sword made no impression on the impenetrable scales of his enemy, continued the battle with great obstinacy, until, in retreating to avoid the poisonous breath of the dragon, he fell backwards into a well full of water. Luckily for him, a female saint had bathed in this water; and had thereby imparted to it such marvellous efficacy, that, whilst it healed the wound and restored the almost exhausted strength of the Christian hero, it effectually impeded the attack of the dragon. Sir Bevis now renewed the combat, but the serpent spouting on him about a gallon of venom, he instantly fell senseless on the ground, where his enemy continued to whip him with his tail, till he whipped him a second

time into the miraculous well. Here he again recovered his senses, and began to say his prayers with much devotion; after which he adjusted at his leisure the several pieces of his armour which had been discomposed by the rough treatment which they had met with whilst he lay on the ground; and finally issued again from the well, and wielded the good sword Morglay with a degree of vigour which his wearied enemy was no longer willing to encounter. The dragon now began to retreat in his turn; but Bevis, following him, had the good fortune to cut off about five feet of that wicked tail from which he had suffered such dreadful bruises; after which, he had little difficulty in severing the monster's head from the body. Having then returned thanks to heaven for this signal victory, he returned in triumph to Cologne with the dragon's head, and was received by the people and by the good bishop as the deliverer of the country.

Having acquired such claims to the bishop's gratitude, Sir Bevis applied to him for advice and assistance in promoting his long meditated project to revenge the death of his father. The prelate readily promised him a hundred knights, all men of approved valour, who, he said, would rejoice to serve under the banners of such a distinguished leader; and this little troop requiring no time for preparation, the knight took leave of his dear Josyan, whom he intrusted during his absence to the care of Ascapard, and, embarking for England, arrived, shortly after, at a port within a few miles of Southampton. He landed, and marched towards that town preceded by a messenger, whom he sent to Sir Murdour, with orders to say that "a knight of Britany, with a hundred companions from different parts of France, was just arrived in quest of service, which they offered to him in the first instance, but should, if refused, transfer to his competitor." Sir Murdour was overjoyed at this offer, which he readily accepted; and, advancing to meet the strangers, ushered Sir Bevis with great ceremony into the hall, and paid him during supper the most marked attentions, in which he was faithfully imitated by the countess.

The assumed name of Bevis was Sir Jarrard; and under this name he had the amusement of hearing a most curious account of his own adventures. Sir Murdour told him that Sir Guy, the first husband of the countess, was a man of

ignoble blood; that, perhaps for this reason, his son Bevis became a mere vulgar spendthrift, sold to him his heritage, and then for shame quitted the country; that Sir Saber, without any legal claim, attempted to wrest from him his purchase; and that this was the quarrel in which he required the services of his noble guests. Bevis, during this relation, was much tempted to punish on the spot the shameless effrontery of his step-father; but he concealed his emotions, and determined to meet fraud with fraud. Addressing himself to Sir Murdour, he said, "Such being your quarrel, myself and my company, had we been able to come properly equipped, might have easily settled it. Indeed, if you will lend us arms and horses, and provide us a ship for our conveyance, we will depart this very night, and will promise not to lose sight of Saber till your disagreement shall be finally adjusted." This offer was thankfully accepted; Bevis carried off to the Isle of Wight the choicest armour and the finest horses that his enemy could furnish; and, having joined Saber, instantly ordered a messenger to return to Southampton,—

"And tell to Sir Murdour, right,
That I am no Frenche knight,
Nor he hight not Sir Jarrard,
That made with him that foreward;[1]
But say it was Bevis of renown,
The right heir of South-Hamptoun;
And say, his countess is my dame;
The Devil give them both shame!
And say I will avenged be,
Of that they did to my father and me!"

This being faithfully reported to Sir Murdour, who was then at table, he snatched up a knife and threw it at the ambassador of Sir Bevis, but had the misfortune to aim the blow so ill that it missed the intended object and pierced the heart of his own son; a circumstance which, being immediately related to Sir Bevis, was considered by him as a proof of divine interposition, and as a most fortunate omen of his future success.

We must now return with our author to the beautiful Josyan, whom we left at Cologne. There lived in the neigh-

[1] Promise, contract.

bourhood of that city a powerful earl named Sir Mile, who saw, became enamoured of her, and resolved to enjoy her. Josyan, to whom he communicated without ceremony both his wishes and his determination to gratify them, only laughed at him, and frankly told him that if he attempted violence he would meet with a very serious resistance from her, and not less from Ascapard. But the crafty German was aware that nothing was so easy as to over-reach the giant. He forged a letter to him from Sir Bevis, ordering his immediate attendance in an island which he described, and to which the obedient page readily followed the bearer of the letter: after this, the gates of the castle into which he was decoyed being locked, a circumstance to which he paid little attention, he patiently expected the arrival of his master. Sir Mile, no longer apprehensive from this quarter, sent an account of his success to Josyan, who now, justly alarmed, dispatched a messenger to Bevis, imploring his immediate assistance, and then, after devising a variety of stratagems to escape her hated lover, at length fixed on the most extraordinary that perhaps ever entered into the head of woman. She calmly told Sir Mile, at his next visit, that she had sworn never to surrender her person to a lover, and that his power, great as it might be, should never compel her to break her oath; but that a husband had rights which she could not with reason oppose, and that he might, if he pleased, become that husband. Sir Mile, overjoyed and astonished at this declaration, thanked her with transport, and gave orders for the immediate solemnization of the wedding. They were married.

There lacked nothing, verily,
Of rich meats, and minstrelsy.
When it drew towarde night,
A riche souper there was dight,
And after that, verament,
The knight and she to chamber went.
Within her bed when that she was,
The Earl came and did rejoice,
With barons, and great company,
And possets made with spicery.
When that they had drunken wine,
" Sir," said Josyan, " and love mine,

Let no person near us be
This night, to hear our privité,
Neither knight, maiden, nor swain;
Myself shall be your chamberlain!"
He said, "Leman, it shall be so;"
Man and maid he bade out go:
He shut the door well and fast,
And sat him down at the last.

Josyan was waiting for this moment. She had made a slip-knot in her girdle, and suddenly passing it round his neck, and pulling at it with her whole strength, most effectually strangled him, and, hanging him up over the beam of the roof, quietly resigned herself to sleep. Her rest indeed was so profound, that it was protracted much beyond her usual hour of rising.

The barons gan for to arise,
Some for hunting, some for kirk,
And workmen rose to do their work.
The sun shone; it drew to under;[1]
The barons thereof hadde wonder,
Why the Earl lay so long in bed.
Tho[2] they all wondred had,
Some saiden, "Let him lygge still:
Of Josyan let him han his will."
Mid-day came; it drew to noon:
The boldest said, "How may this gon?
Wete I wol myself, and see
How it may therof i-bee."
He smote the door with his hond,
That all wide open soon it wond.
"Awake, awake," he said, "Sir Mile,
Thou hast islepen a long while!
Thine head aketh, I wot right wel:
Dame, make him a cawdel!'
Josyan said, "At that sake
Never eft wol his head ake;
I have eased him of that sore,
His head wol ake never more.

[1] Under-time; *i.e.*, nine o'clock. [2] When.

All night he hath ridden idle,
Withouten halter, withouten bridle.
Yesterday he wedded me with wrong,
And at night I did him hong.
Never eft shall he woman spill:
Now doeth with me all your will!"

As it was notorious that she had been married to Sir Mile, and no less so that she had murdered him, the law condemned her to the flames; and the barons in the interest, who were not a little offended by the haughty language of her confession, exerted themselves with great zeal in hastening the preparation for her execution. Ascapard, from the walls of his castle, happened to descry these preparations, and, suspecting some mischief, instantly burst open the gates of his prison; plunged into the water; swam towards a fisherman's boat, which its proprietor, wisely deeming him to be the devil, hastily abandoned on his approach; paddled to the opposite shore; and advanced with hasty strides towards the city. He was overtaken by Sir Bevis, who taxed him with treachery; from which, however, he easily exculpated himself. The two champions then hastened forward; exterminated all who opposed them; rescued Josyan from the stake to which she was already bound; and, placing her behind her lover on Arundel, shortly returned to the Isle of Wight, where the princess and the giant were duly welcomed by Sir Saber.

Both parties now began their preparations for war. Sir Bevis and Sir Saber collected a moderate number of knights, with whose valour they were well acquainted, while Sir Murdour summoned a large army from Germany, and was joined, in consequence of an application from the countess, by the King of Scotland. In the month of May, "when leaves and grass ginneth spring," Sir Murdour embarked his troops, landed without opposition, and encamped close to a castle in which Saber had collected all his forces. The old man, disdaining to be besieged, had no sooner descried the enemy than he prepared to give them battle; and heading one-third of his troops, whilst the two other divisions were led on by Sir Bevis and by Ascapard, began the attack with great fury.

Sir Menes, the mouncheer so feer,[1]
His steed he pricked again Sabere.
His spear was long, and somedeal keen;
Sabere him met, and that was seen!
And though his spear were sharply ground,
Sir Sabere him gave a deadly wound.

In the mean time Sir Bevis had solely attached himself to Sir Murdour; had thrown him to the ground; but, being enveloped by numbers, had been unable to make him captive. He therefore called loudly on Ascapard—

——————and to him said,
" Ascapard! now take good heed!
The emperor rideth on a white steed.
Thine hire I wol yield right well,
Giff thou him bring to the castel."

Ascapard tho forth him dight,
And both he slew horse and knight,
And soon he took that emperour,
And brought him swithe to the tower.

Sir Bevis rode swithe great randoun;
" Let boilen," he said, " a great caldroun,
Full of pitch and brimstone,
And hot lead cast thereupon!"
Tho it did seethe,[2] and played fast,
The emperor therein he cast.
There he died and made his end;
His soul to hell so mot it wend!
Houndes gnaw him to the bone!
So wreak[3] us, God, of all our foen!

By the capture and death of the chief the battle was of course decided; and that nothing might be wanting to Sir Bevis's vengeance, the countess, unwilling to survive her husband, threw herself from the top of a lofty tower, and was killed on the spot. The burgesses of Southampton, now at liberty to express their real feelings, rushed out in crowds to hail the approach of their natural lord. Sir Bevis dispatched a messenger to the bishop of Cologne, who joyfully obeyed the summons,

[1] Monsieur si fier. Fr. [2] Boil. [3] Revenge.

And wedded Bevis and Josyan,
With mirth and joy of many a man.
Right great feast there was hold,
Of earls, barouns, and knightys bold;
Of ladies and maidens, I understond,
All the fairest of that lond,
That all the castle dinned and rong
Of her mirth and of her song.

The reader will now be disposed to flatter himself that this prodigious and eventful history is terminated; that Sir Bevis will in future sleep quietly in his bed, Arundel in his stable, and Morglay in its scabbard. But though the principal interest of the piece is at an end, the author is not yet prepared to part with his hero, who is still young and vigorous. He has also upon his hands two Saracen kingdoms, those of Ermony and Mounbraunt, which, according to all the laws of romance-writing, he is bound to convert to Christianity; and a giant, whose native propensities to wickedness it is necessary to develop.

Sir Bevis had now avenged the death and regained the territories of his father, but he did not yet possess his hereditary honours; and it was requisite that he should receive, at London, from the hands of his sovereign, the investiture of the earldom. This was readily conferred by King Edgar on a vassal, whose heroic deeds were already celebrated through the country: and the monarch at the same time conferred on the knight the dignity of earl-marshal, which had been also enjoyed by Sir Guy. But merit, though it may sometimes command court-favour, is very seldom found to retain it.

In summer it was, at Whitsuntide,
When knight must on horse ride,
The king a course he did grede,[1]
For to assayen the best steed,
Which weren both stiff and strong.

Sir Bevis would not lose such an opportunity of proving the incomparable speed of Arundel; and though, by some mistake, he did not start till two knights, his competitors, had already advanced two miles out of seven, of which the course consisted, he persevered and won the race. Edgar's son, de-

[1] Caused to be cried or proclaimed.

sirous of possessing the best horse in the world, begged him as a boon from Sir Bevis; and when the knight refused to part with his old favourite, the mean-spirited prince determined to steal him. But we have seen that Arundel was not easily compelled to change his masters. When the prince, having gained admittance into the stable, approached the steed, with the intention of leading him away, the indignant Arundel gave him a sudden kick, and scattered his brains about the stable. Edgar, inconsolable for the loss of his son, swore to be revenged on Sir Bevis, and ordered him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; but the barons refused to ratify this unjust sentence, observing that Arundel alone, being guilty of the murder, must suffer punishment. Sir Bevis, however, proposed, as an expiation of the horse's crime, to banish himself from England, and to make over all his estates to his uncle Saber; and this commutation being accepted, he immediately departed with Arundel for Southampton.

Josyan was far advanced in her pregnancy when she learnt the necessity of her immediate departure; yet she obeyed without a murmur, and set off accompanied only by Bevis and his nephew, Terry. Meanwhile, this change in the fortunes of Sir Bevis produced a considerable alteration in the mind of Ascapard. By betraying a master whom he had served rather from the habit of obedience than from gratitude, he hoped to obtain the most important favours from his former sovereign; and, having learned exactly the route which Bevis intended to take, he hastened to Mounbraunt; and, promising King Inor to replace Josyan in his hands, obtained from him a company of sixty Saracens to assist in carrying her off, together with the assurance of a princely reward in the event of his success.

The exiled travellers advanced but slowly. Josyan was seized, in the midst of a forest, with the pains of child-birth; and Bevis and Terry, having constructed a hut for her reception, together with a couch of leaves, received her commands to absent themselves for a few hours, and then return to her assistance. Scarcely were they departed, when she was delivered of two *knave* children, and almost at the same instant she beheld the ferocious Ascapard, who, well aware of the absence of her protectors, carried her off, without paying the least regard to her fears or entreaties. Bevis, returning with

Terry to the hut, and finding the two children naked, and unaccompanied by their mother, easily guessed what had happened, and swooned with grief; but, soon recovering himself, cut in two the ermine mantle of Josyan, which had fortunately been left behind; carefully wrapped up the children; and, mounting his horse, pursued his journey. A forester, whom he met shortly after, readily undertook the charge of one of the children, promising to christen it by the name of Guy, and to educate it with great care till it should be reclaimed: and the other was consigned to a fisherman, together with *ten marks*, with directions to christen it by the name of Mile, and the ceremony was duly performed at *the church-stile* in his village. The knight and his young squire now emerged from the forest, and arrived at a considerable town, where they determined to stay some time in the hope of hearing intelligence concerning Ascapard and Josyan.

On a soleer,[1] as Bevis looked out,
At a window all about,
Helms he saw and brynnys[2] bright:
He had great wonder of that sight.

He learnt from his host, that a tournament had been proclaimed at the request of a young lady, the daughter and heiress of a duke, who meant to give her hand to the victor knight. Though indifferent about the prize, Sir Bevis was by no means indifferent about an opportunity of justing, and Terry was still more anxious to prove his valour.

Sir Bevis disguised all his weed,
Of black cendal and of rede,
Flourished with roses of silver bright;
And that was thing of full great sight.
They comen riding in the way,
Bevis and Terry together, they tway;
A knight was ready in that grene,
And Bevis pricked to him, as I wene.

In short, Bevis and Terry overcame all their antagonists, and the former was selected by the fair lady as her intended husband; but as she found that he was already married, and as heaven had blessed her with an accommodating disposition, she proposed that he should be her lord only *in clean manere;*

[1] An upper room, a garret. [2] Cuirasses.

and that if, after seven years of this Platonic apprenticeship, his real wife should appear, she would then accept Terry as her husband. These terms were accepted by Bevis and by his companion.

But we must now hasten to Sir Saber, who, though rather an insignificant character in the prime of life, is become very interesting in his old age, and increases in activity as he approaches towards decrepitude. Saber was a great dreamer; and his wife, whose name was Erneborugh, was a great expounder of dreams; so that no sooner had Ascapard carried off Josyan, than this couple discovered, by going to sleep, that some great misfortune had befallen Sir Bevis, and that he had lost either his wife, or his children, or his horse, or his sword. Saber instantly summoned twelve of his best knights, cased them in complete armour, concealed under pilgrims' robes, gave them *burdons* or staves headed with the sharpest steel, and, assuming the same disguise, put himself at their head, and took the road to Mounbraunt. He even travelled with such expedition, that he overtook Ascapard, killed him with the first thrust of his burdon, and, as soon as his companions had destroyed the sixty Saracens, which was very speedily effected, sent them home to his wife to announce the accomplishment of his dream. Josyan made an ointment; and

> Her skin that was both bright and shene
> Therewith she made both yellow and grene;

and, being thus completely disguised, accompanied Saber during near seven years, till Providence led them to the town where Sir Bevis resided. Here her faithful guide, having discovered his son Terry, delivered her into the arms of her husband; and her children being sent for, she was restored to tranquillity and happiness after her long and disastrous wanderings.

We are now summoned to the country of Ermony, which King Inor, having lost all traces of Ascapard and Josyan, and thinking it necessary to vent his rage on that princess's father, had determined to lay waste with fire and sword. This news was brought to Sir Bevis, who, sending his summons to all the warriors whom he had formerly commanded, soon collected a respectable army for the defence of King Ermyn; and, putting himself at their head, together with Josyan, Saber,

and the children Guy and Mile, marched to the capital. Ermyn was scarcely less frightened by the approach of his son-in-law than by that of his enemy; he threw himself on his knees, implored forgiveness, and finally proposed to embrace Christianity. The last article ensured him a complete reconciliation with his son and daughter; and his subjects being easily persuaded that the true religion was that which placed Sir Bevis at their head, and ensured them from being plundered, the baptism of the monarch was soon followed by that of the whole country.

The fortune of war was not propitious to King Inor, who was taken prisoner in the first engagement, and sent to Ermyn, with whom it was agreed

> That his ransom ben shold
> Sixty hundred pounds of gold,
> With four hundred beds, of silk each one,
> With quiltys of gold fair begone,
> Four hundred cuppys of gold fine,
> And all so many of maselyn.[1]

The venerable Ermyn did not long survive this good fortune. Finding his end approaching, he sent for Guy, placed the crown on his head, and expired. The good Saber, seeing the family of Sir Bevis so well established, now became desirous of visiting his wife Erneborugh, and, taking leave of his friends, returned to England.

Guy being firmly settled on the throne of Ermony, Sir Bevis and Josyan might have enjoyed a long interval of tranquillity, but for the machinations of a wicked thief called Rabone, at the court of King Inor, who, being tolerably versed in the black art, contrived to spirit away the faithful Arundel. This was a constant subject of regret to his disconsolate master; but fortunately Sir Saber, being now returned to his wife, had resumed the habit of dreaming, and found out that something of value had been lost which it was his business to discover and restore. He therefore set off without hesitation for Mounbraunt, and, arriving in his pilgrim's garb at a river near the town, to which the horses were usually led to water, discovered the perfidious Rabone mounted on Arundel. He immediately addressed the thief:

[1] Brass. See Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 543.

"Fellow," he said, "so God me speed,
This may well be called a steed.
He is well breasted without doubt;
Good fellow, turn thee about."
And as he turned him there,
Up behind lept Sabere.
He smote to death the thief Rabone
With the end of his truncheon.

He now set off at full speed for Ermony, and, as the news of Arundel's escape had been instantly carried to King Inor, was shortly followed by a little army of the best-mounted Saracens. But Josyan, who was standing on a turret, recognised the horse at a great distance; she spread the alarm; and Sir Bevis, putting himself at the head of a few followers, soon rescued his friend, and cut off the heads of all his impertinent pursuers.

Inor, much disturbed by this ill success, requested the advice of his brother Bradwin, king of Syria. Bradwin observed to him that he was a knight of great prowess; that Bevis was not invulnerable; that the event of battles was in the hand of Mahomet; and that he would do well to say his prayers with great earnestness and solemnity, and then to propose a single combat with Bevis. Inor, who was not at all deficient in courage, took the advice, and, leading an army into Ermony, thus addressed his adversary:

"Bevis, thou shalt understonde
Why we come into this londe.
First, thou ravished my wife,
And sithen reft my men their life.
Therefore have I taken counsayl
Between us two to hold batayl.
And if thou slay me, by Termagaunt,
I give thee the londe of Mounbraunt;
And if I slay thee, nat forthy,[1]
I will thou graunt me Ermony."

These conditions were joyfully accepted; and the two combatants rode, in the sight of their respective armies, towards a small island encompassed by a deep and rapid river. Inor

[1] The construction seems to be, "and if *on the other hand* I slay thee:" perhaps *nat forthy* is *nevertheless*.

had the honour of disputing the victory much longer than could have been expected, but sunk at last under the blows of the terrible Morglay. His troops were cut off to a man; after which Bevis, having put on the "conysaunce" or coat-armour of his adversary, rapidly marched his army to Mounbraunt, and, being mistaken by the garrison for their sovereign, was admitted without hesitation. Thus was he invested with a second empire, which he had the skill or good fortune to reclaim from Mahometanism by the usual methods; enriching all early proselytes to Christianity, and cutting to pieces without mercy those who persisted in their errors.

One day, whilst Sir Bevis and Josyan were taking the pleasures of the chase, they met a messenger dispatched to Saber by his good old wife, to announce that Edgar, king of England, had deprived their son Robert of all his estates, for the purpose of enriching a wicked favourite, Sir Bryant of Cornwall. Bevis, who had bestowed these estates on Saber, considered such an act as a personal insult, and determined to accompany his friend to England at the head of a formidable army. They landed in safety at Southampton, and, marching rapidly towards London, encamped at Putney. Here Sir Bevis left his troops, together with Josyan, Saber, Terry, Guy, and Mile, and, taking with him only twelve knights, repaired to the king, whom he found at Westminster, and, falling on his knees, humbly requested the restoration of his estates.

Edgar, always inclined to peace, would have been glad to consent; but his steward, Sir Bryant, observed to him that Sir Bevis was a traitor, who trained up his horses in the habit of kicking out the brains of princes, and that he was still an outlaw, whose death it was the duty of all good subjects to procure by every possible device. The king, listening to this secret enemy, gave no answer, and Sir Bevis, with his attendants, took up their lodgings in the city to await his determination: but scarcely were they arrived at their inn, when they heard that a proclamation had been issued, enjoining the citizens to shut their gates, to barricade every street, and to seize Sir Bevis alive or dead. The knight now found it necessary to provide for his defence. Having armed himself and his followers, he sallied forth in hopes of forcing his way out of the city before the measures of security should be complete; but he immediately met the steward, Sir Bryant, at the head of hundred soldiers—

A stroke he set upon his crown,
That to the saddle he clave him down.
So, within a little stound,
All two hundred he slew to ground.
Thorough Goose-lane Bevis went tho;
There was him done right mickle wo!
That lane was so narrow y-wrought,
That Sir Bevis might defend him nought.
He had wunnen into his honde
Many a batayle in sundry londe;
But he was never so careful man,
For siker of sooth,[1] as he was than.
When Bevis saw his men were dead,
For sorrow couthe he no rede![2]
But Morglay his sword he drew,
And many he felled, and many he slew.
Many a man he slew tho,
And out he went with mickle wo!

The destruction of our hero appeared inevitable, after the disastrous adventure of Goose-lane, where his twelve companions were ingloriously murdered: but to Sir Bevis, when armed with Morglay and mounted on Arundel, nothing was wanting but a theatre sufficiently spacious for the display of his valour; and this he found in the Cheap, or market-place. He was beset by innumerable crowds: but Arundel, indignant at the insolence of the plebeian assailants, by kicking on one side and biting on another, dispersed them in all directions to a distance of forty feet, while his master cut off the heads of all such as were driven, by the pressure of those behind, within reach of the terrible Morglay.

In the mean time the news of the knight's distress was spread from mouth to mouth, and it was reported to Josyan that he was actually dead. After swooning with terror, she related the circumstance to her sons, and, blinded by fear, proposed an immediate retreat. But they answered that they were resolved to seek their father alive or dead, and, hastily requesting her benediction, collected four thousand knights, and departed at full speed from Putney.

[1] For certain truth. [2] Could think of no counsel.

Sir Guy bestrode a Rabyte,[1]
That was mickle, and nought light,[2]
That Sir Bevis in Paynim londe
Hadde i-wunnen with his honde.
A sword he took of mickle might,
That was y-cleped Aroundight,
It was Launcelot's du Lake,
Therwith he slew the fire-drake.[3]
The pomel was of charbocle[4] stone;
(A better sword was never none,
The Romauns tellyth as I you say,
Ne none shall till Doomesday.)
And Sir Mylys there bestrid
A dromounday,[5] and forth he rid.
That horse was swift as any swallow,
No man might that horse begallowe.[6]

They crossed the river without opposition under cover of the night, and, having set fire to Ludgate, which was closed against them, forced their way into the city, and proceeded in search of Sir Bevis. They found him untouched by any wound, but quite exhausted by the fatigue of a battle, which had now lasted during great part of the day and the whole of the night. Arundel too stood motionless, bathed to his fetlocks in blood, and surrounded by dead bodies. The day had just dawned, and a burgher of some note, well armed and mounted, made a blow at Sir Bevis, under which the hero drooped to his saddle-bows; but at the same instant Sir Guy rushed forward:

To that burgess a stroke he sent,
Thorough helm and hauberk down it went;
Both man and horse, in that stound,
He cleaved down to the ground!
His swordys point to the earth went,
That fire sprang out of the pavement.

The fatigued and disheartened Sir Bevis immediately recovered new life at the sight of his son's valour; Arundel too resumed his wonted vivacity; and when Sir Mile, who rivalled

[1] An Arabian horse. [2] Weak. [3] Fiery dragon.
[4] Carbuncle. [5] A war-horse. [6] Out-gallop.

his brother in gallantry, came up with the rest of the reinforcement, the discomfiture of the assailants was soon decided.

The blood fell on that pavement
Right down to the Temple-bar it went,
As it is said in French romaunce,
Both in Yngelonde and in Fraunce.
So many men at once were never seen dead.
For the water of Thames for blood wax red;
Fro St. Mary Bowe to London Stone[1],
That ilke time was housing none.

In short, sixty thousand men were slain in this battle; after which Sir Bevis and his sons returned, crowned with victory, to their camp at Putney.

King Edgar, alarmed by this dreadful slaughter, of which Sir Bryant had been the sole author, and was fortunately the first victim, convened his council, represented to them his own wish for peace, and suggested, as the most effectual means of obtaining it, the offer of his only daughter and heiress to Mile, son of Bevis. The barons acceding to this proposal, the marriage took place; and Sir Mile, in right of his wife, was crowned king of England. Bevis, with Josyan and his other son, repaired to Ermony, where Sir Guy resumed the reins of government, and then continued his journey to Mounbraunt, of which he had reserved the sovereignty to himself. Here the amiable Josyan was seized with a mortal disease, and expired in the arms of her husband: at the same moment he received information that his faithful Arundel had died suddenly in the stable; and in a few minutes the hero himself breathed his last on the lips of his deceased wife. Their remains were interred under the high altar of a church erected by their subjects in honour of their memory, and dedicated to St. Laurence, where they continue to work frequent miracles.

God on their souls have now pity,
And on Arundel his good steed,
Giff men for horse shoulden sing or read!
Thus endeth Sir Bevis of Hamptoun,
That was so noble a baroun.

[1] London Stone is still preserved, and is probably the most ancient relic of that ancient city.

INTRODUCTION TO RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

THIS romance, according to Mr. Warton, has been thrice printed; first in 8vo, by W. de Worde, in 1509; again by the same, in 4to, 1528; and a third time, without date, by W. C. Ritson doubted the existence of any other edition than that of 1528, of which there is a copy in the Bodleian Library, 4to, C. 39. Art. Seld.

Of the MS. copies now known to exist, the most ancient is a fragment in the Auchinleck MS. in the Advocates' library at Edinburgh: this, however, contains only two leaves; a second fragment is amongst the Harleian MSS. No. 4690; and a third, which belonged to the late Dr. Farmer, is now in Douce's collection at Oxford, No. 228. The most perfect copy extant is in the library of Caius College, Cambridge; but even in this several leaves are wanting.

The following abstract is principally taken from the Caius Coll. MS.,[1] the omissions of which were supplied in one place from Douce's MS., and in all the others from the printed copy; which, upon collation, was found to differ from it only by the occasional substitution of a more modern phraseology, where that of the MS. was probably considered by the printer as too antiquated to be intelligible.

The English version of this romance (for it is professedly a translation), if merely considered as a poem, possesses considerable merit. The verse, it is true, is generally rough and inharmonious; but the expression is often forcible, and unusually free from the drawling expletives which so frequently annoy the reader in the compositions of the minstrels. As recording many particular of the dress, food, and manners of our ancestors, it possesses rather more claims on our curiosity than other romances of the same period, because it was compiled within a very few years of the events which it professes to describe: indeed, there are strong reasons for believing that the first French original, and even the earliest English version, contained an authentic history of Richard's reign, compiled from contemporary documents, although that history was afterward enlarged and disfigured by numerous and most absurd interpolations.

[1] Printed in Weber's Metrical Romances, 1810.

Robert of Gloucester, and Robert de Brunne, frequently refer their readers to the *romance* of Richard for a variety of circumstances which could not properly find a place in a mere historical abridgment: it is therefore certain that such a work, probably composed by some of the French poets who attended the monarch in his expedition to Acres, was known to these historians, and considered by them as a document of unquestionable authority. On the other hand, it is quite impossible that the many absurd fables introduced into the following narrative should have found credit with two sober and accurate historians, one of whom wrote before the close of the thirteenth century. We must therefore suppose that the work in question, though written on a most popular subject, has by some accident been totally lost; or that, in passing from hand to hand, it has gradually received the strange and unnatural ornaments by which we now see it encumbered.

The latter supposition is confirmed by the following strong evidence:—The Auchinleck MS. was unquestionably transcribed in the minority of Edward III., and is probably earlier, by at least a century, than any other copy of Richard Cœur de Lion. It consists, indeed, of no more than two leaves; yet the first of these contains, together with the prologue, the commencement of Richard's reign, which it relates in perfect conformity to our regular historians, totally omitting all the nonsense about Henry II. and his Pagan wife, and Richard's amours in Germany, and his battle with the lion, &c. &c. At the same time, if we compare that fragment with the correspondent passages in the more modern copies, we find them to agree line for line. It seems, therefore, that the poem in the Auchinleck MS. was translated from some early French copy, before the introduction of those fictions which have given an air of fable to the whole narrative.

If we possessed the French original, we should probably be able, by an examination of the style, to ascertain pretty nearly the date of the fabulous additions. That they were introduced by some Norman minstrel into the French copy is nearly certain, because such liberties were habitual to them all; whereas there is perhaps no one instance in which our early translators have ventured to alter any material circumstances in the story which they undertook to give in English. Besides, from the frequent mention of the Templars in the romance, it

appears to have been written when that order were at the height of their splendour. Now they were suppressed at the very commencement of the reign of Edward II., and probably before the first English translation was completed. It may therefore be assumed that such an event, which occupied the attention and interested the passions of all Europe, would not have passed without some notice or comment, had not the translator felt it his duty to give an exact and faithful copy of his original.

From the internal evidence of the fictions themselves, the reign of Edward I. seems the most likely period which can be assigned for their invention. During the life of King John the remembrance of his heroic brother was probably too fresh to permit any material alteration of the real story; but seventy years of misery and of civil dissension, which elapsed before the death of Henry III., are likely to have diminished the recollection so far as to encourage the minstrels in making any changes in the poem which might render it more astonishing and more agreeable to their hearers, or which might afford them an opportunity of indirectly flattering the reigning prince, whose character did in fact bear some resemblance to that of his lion-hearted ancestor.

Richard, we know, never visited the Holy Land till he appeared there at the head of a most formidable army; but Edward, having taken the cross before his accession, fought there as an adventurous knight, and, though almost without troops, greatly signalized himself by his personal valour against the infidels. Richard had no leisure for tournaments, but Edward had an opportunity of gaining all the laurels of chivalry in the famous lists of Chalons. Possibly these coincidences may account for the perversion of some parts of the story: but it must be owned that the strange fable of the fair Cassodorien is equally inapplicable to Edward and to Richard; unless we suppose that the author, being embarrassed by the positive assertion of the Scots, "that the kings of England are descended from the devil on the mother's side," hoped to gratify Edward by this ingenious compromise.

Be this as it may, the most curious incident in this fable is certainly anterior to the reign of Richard I., because it is preserved in the "Otia Imperialia" of Gervase of Tilbury, whence it is quoted by Sir W. Scott, (Minst. of Scot. Border,

vol. ii. p. 184, note). It is there said that "the lord of a certain castle called Espervel, having observed that his wife, for several years, always left the chapel before mass was concluded, once ordered his guard to detain her by force. The consequence was, that, unable to support the elevation of the host, she retreated through the air, carrying with her one side of the chapel." The passage is in the edition of the Brunswick Historians published by Leibnitz. Hanov. 1707. tom. i. p. 978.

Fordun, after dwelling on the atrocious profligacy of King John, applies the same story to one of that prince's female ancestors. He says, "A certain countess of Anjou, from whom was descended Geoffrey Plantagenet, was married solely on account of her uncommon beauty. She seldom went to church, and even then avoided staying for the celebration of the holy mysteries. This being observed by the count her husband, he one day caused her to be held by four of his guards; but she, abandoning the mantle by which they tried to detain her, as well as four of her children, two of whom she had covered on each side with her cloak, suddenly flew through the window of the church, before the whole congregation, and was never more seen. *Richard I., brother of John, used frequently to relate this anecdote; in explanation of the perverseness of disposition inherent in himself and all his brothers.*"—Scotichron. curâ Goodall, tom. 2. p. 9.

The *certain countess Anjou* mentioned by Fordun was, probably, the celebrated Bertrade de Montfort, whose uncommon beauty recommended her to Fulk, surnamed Rechin, earl of Anjou, and who, for the same reason, was again carried off and married by Philip I., king of France. Philip being excommunicated on her account, she returned to Anjou to her former husband, and caused his son by a former wife to be murdered; but being again received by Philip, over whom her charms had procured her a most absolute sway, she continued to fill the throne of France till near the time of her death. It would not be surprising if a woman so envied for her power, so odious from her vices, so long the object of papal excommunication, had been made the heroine of many such tales as this of Gervase and Fordun. She had, by her husband Fulk of Anjou, a son of the same name; and this son married Sibilla, only daughter and heiress of the Comte du Maine, and had

issue four sons; one of whom was Geoffroi le Bel, earl of Anjou, second husband of the Empress Matilda, and father of Henry II. Fordun's authority, it must be confessed, is not worth much, where the character of our Norman princes is concerned; and it is not very probable that Richard used to relate the anecdote attributed to him. That impetuosity of temper which led him into rebellion against his father, would rather induce him to glory in the crime, than to excuse it on the score of an hereditary disposition derived from his great-great-grandmother.

RICHARD CŒUR DE LION.

Lord, King of Glory, what favours didst thou bestow on King Richard! How edifying is it to read the history of his conquests! Many acts of chivalry are familiarly known; the deeds of Charlemagne and Turpin, and of their knights Ogier le Danois, Roland, and Oliver; those of Alexander; those of Arthur and Gawain; and even the ancient wars of Troy and the exploits of Hector and Achilles, are already current in rhyme. But the glory of Richard and of the peerless knights of England, his companions, is at present exhibited only in French books, which not more than one in a hundred of unlearned men can understand. This story, lordings, I propose to tell you; and may the blessing of God be on those who will listen to me with attention!

The father of Richard was King Henry; in whose reign, as I find in my original, Saint Thomas was slain at the altar of the cathedral of Canterbury, where miracles are wrought to this day. King Henry, when twenty years of age, was a prince of great valour; but having a dislike to matrimony, could not be induced to take a wife on account of her wealth or power; and only acceded to the entreaties of his barons, on the condition of their providing for his consort the most beautiful woman in the universe.

Ambassadors were immediately dispatched in every direction to search for this paragon. One party of them was carried, by a fair wind, into the midst of the ocean, where they were suddenly arrested by a calm which threatened to prevent the further prosecution of their voyage. Fortunately, the breeze had already brought them nearly in contact with

nother vessel, which by its astonishing magnificence enrossed their whole attention. Every nail seemed to be eaded with gold; the deck was painted with azure and inaid with ivory; the rudder appeared to be of pure gold; the nast was of ivory; the sails of satin; the ropes of silk; an wning of cloth of gold was spread above the deck; and under his awning were assembled divers knights and ladies most uperbly dressed, appearing to form the court of a princess vhose beauty was "bright as the sun through the glass." Our ambassadors were hailed by this splendid company, and questioned about the object of their voyage: which being explained, they were conducted on board, and received with proper ceremony by the stranger king, who rose from his hair, composed of a single carbuncle stone, to salute them. Trestles were immediately set; a table covered with a silken cloth was laid; a rich repast, ushered in by the sound of trumpets and shalms, was served up; and the English knights had full leisure during dinner to contemplate the charms of the incomparable princess, who was seated near her father. The king then informed them that he had been instructed by a vision to set sail for England with his daughter; and the ambassadors, delighted at finding the success of their search confirmed with this preternatural authority, proposed to accompany him without loss of time to their master. A north-easterly wind springing up at the moment, they set sail, entered the Thames, and soon cast anchor off the Tower; where King Henry happened to be lodged, and was informed by his ambassadors of their safe arrival.

Henry made immediate preparations for the reception of the royal visitors. Attended by his whole court, he went to meet and welcome them at the water-side; from whence the whole company, preceded by bands of minstrels, marched in procession to the royal palace at Westminster, the streets through which they passed being hung with cloth of gold. A magnificent entertainment was provided; after which Henry having thus fulfilled the duties of hospitality addressed the stranger king:

"Lief Sire, what is thy name?"
"My name," he said, "is Corbaring;
Of Antioch I am king."
And told him, in his resoun[1],

[1] Speech, *oraison*, Fr.

He came thither thorough a vision.
"For sothe, Sire, I telle thee,
I had else brought more meynie;
Many mo, withouten fail,
And mo shippes with vitail."
Then asked he that lady bright,
"What hightest thou, my sweet wight?"
"Cassodorien, withouten leasing."
Thus answered she the king.
"Damsel," he said, "bright and sheen,
Wilt thou dwell and be my queen?"
She answered, with words still,
"Sire, I am at my father's will."

After this courtship the king of Antioch, who was no friend to unnecessary delays, proposed that they should be betrothed on that night; and that the nuptials, which he wished to be private, should be celebrated on the following morning.

These conditions were readily accepted, and the fair Cassodorien received the nuptial benediction; but the ceremony was attended with an untoward accident. At the elevation of the host, the young queen fainted away; and her swoon continued so long that it became necessary to carry her out of church into an adjoining chamber. The spectators were much alarmed at this unlucky omen; and she was herself so disturbed by it, that she made a vow never more to assist at any of the sacraments: but it does not seem to have much interrupted the happiness of the royal couple, because the queen became successively the mother of three children; Richard, John, and a daughter named Topyas.

During fifteen years, Cassodorien was permitted to persevere in her resolution without any remonstrance from King Henry; but unluckily, after this period, one of his principal barons remarked to him that her conduct gave general scandal, and requested his permission to detain her in church from the commencement of the mass till its termination. Henry consented; and when the queen, on hearing the bell which announced the celebration of the sacrament, prepared to leave the church, the baron opposed her departure, and attempted to detain her by force. The event of the experiment was rather extraordinary. Cassodorien, seizing her daughter with one hand, and Prince John with the other,

Out of the roof she gan her dight[1]
Openly, before all their sight!
John fell from the air, in that stound,
And brake his thigh on the ground;
And with her daughter she fled away,
That never after she was y-seye[2].

Henry repented, when it was too late, of his deference to the advice of his courtiers. Inconsolable for the loss of the beautiful Cassodorien, he languished for a short time, and then died, leaving his dominions to his eldest son Richard, who was now in his fifteenth year, and was already distinguished by his premature excellence in all the exercises of chivalry.

In the first year of his reign the young king caused a solemn tournament to be proclaimed at Salisbury, for the purpose of ascertaining, by experiment, the stoutest knights in his dominions. With this view he prepared three several disguises, in which he meant to appear as a *knight adventurous*, and to challenge all comers. His first suit of armour was black; his horse was of the same colour; and the only device by which he could be distinguished was a raven on the crest of his helmet, which had its beak open, as if panting from fatigue, and had a bell suspended from its neck. The bird, it seems, was an emblem of patience under labour and pain; and the bell signified the Christian church, the protection of which is the principal aim of chivalry. Thus accoutered, he issued from a neighbouring wood, entered the lists, and proclaimed a general challenge. The invitation was not tempting, because the enormous size of his spear, which was fourteen feet long, and one-and-twenty inches round, intimated no common strength in the arm by which it was wielded. Accordingly, the first knight who ventured to encounter it was instantly overset, together with his horse; a second was borne down with such violence, that horse and man were killed by the fall; and a third was punished for his temerity by a dislocated shoulder and various other bruises. No other champion thought fit to accept the defiance; and the black knight, having waited for some time to no purpose, set spurs to his horse, plunged into the forest, and disappeared. He now mounted a bay horse; assumed a suit of armour of painted

[1] Made ready to go. [2] Seen.

red; and a helmet, the crest of which was a red hound with a long tail which reached to the earth; an emblem intended to convey his indignation against the heathen hounds who defiled the Holy Land, and his determination to attempt their destruction. Having sufficiently signalized himself in this new disguise, he rode into the ranks for the purpose of selecting a more formidable adversary; and, delivering his spear to his squire, took his mace, and assaulted Sir Thomas de Multon, a knight whose prowess was deservedly held in the highest estimation. Sir Thomas, apparently not at all disconcerted by a blow which would have felled a common adversary, calmly advised him to go and amuse himself elsewhere; but Richard, having aimed at him a second and more violent stroke, by which his helmet was nearly crushed, he returned it with such vigour that the king lost his stirrups, and, recovering himself with some difficulty, rode off with all speed into the forest. Here, after refreshing himself with a large draught of water, he assumed his third disguise, which was a suit of white armour, with a red cross painted on his right shoulder. His crest was a white dove, an emblem of the holy ghost, and he was mounted on a snow white charger. Not finding any knight disposed to just with him, he rode round the ring in search of a worthy antagonist; and, espying Sir Fulk Doyley, instantly attacked him with all his might. But Sir Fulk was no less phlegmatic than Sir Thomas. The stroke of Richard's mace, though it struck fire from his helmet, seemed to make no impression on the head contained in it, and the stout knight contented himself with remonstrating against a repetition of the attack. But a second blow, still more vigorous than the former, having awakened him from his lethargy, he exerted all his strength, and struck the king with such violence that he lost not only his stirrups but the saddle also, and, being unable to guide his horse, was borne away by him, almost senseless, to the palace.

The tournament being concluded, he summoned the two knights whose powers he had so feelingly witnessed, and interrogated them respecting the merits of the several combatants. Both agreed in assigning the honour of the day to three unknown knights in black, red, and white armour, though each complained of his respective adversary for his unprovoked attack, and for his subsequent retreat, which

deprived them of the victory they had hoped to acquire. Sir Fulk, unable to reconcile the strength and apparent bravery of the white knight with such strange conduct, firmly believed him to be some preternatural personage:

"Y-wis[1], Sire King," quoth Sir Fouk,
"I wene that knight was a pouk[2]."

Richard, with a smile, explained to them the apparent mystery. He informed them that it was his wish to visit the Holy Land in the habit of a pilgrim, for the double purpose of satisfying his devotion, and of reconnoitring the military positions in that country; and that, having selected them, as the intended companions of his expedition, he had previously wished to ascertain, by his own experience, whether they were fit for such an arduous enterprise. He then proposed that they should all three take the oath of secresy and of inviolable attachment to each other; and the two knights having joyfully entered into his views, and contracted the sacred engagement by which they all became *brothers in arms*, they embraced each other, and parted, after a short repast, for the purpose of making the necessary preparations for the journey.

At the end of twenty days they set sail, accoutred

With pike, and with sclavyn,
As palmers were in Paynim,—

and landed in Flanders; from whence they proceeded by land till they arrived at Braundys, where they again took shipping for Cyprus.

At Famagos they came to land;
There they dwelled forty dawes,
For to learn land's laws,
And sith did them on the sea,
Towards Acres, that cité.
And so forth, to Massedoyne,
And to the cité of Babyloyne,
And fro thence to Cesare;
Of Nimivé they were ware,
And the cité of Jerusalem,
And of the cité of Bedlem,
And of the cité of Soudan Turry,
And eke also of Abedy.

[1] Certainly. [2] A puck, a fairy.

And to the Castel Orglyous,
And to the cité Aperrous;
To Jaffe, and to Saffrane,
To Tabaret and Archane.
Thus they visited the Holy Land.

On their return they unfortunately determined to pass through Germany, where they met with the following sinister adventure.

A goose[1] they dight to their dinner
In a tavern where they were.
King Richard the fire bet;
Thomas to the spit him set;
Fouk Doyley tempered the wood;
Dear abought they that good!
When they had drunken well afin,
A minstralle com therein,
And said, "Gentlemen, wittily,
Will ye have any minstrelsy?"
Richard bade that she should go;
That turned him to mickle woe!
The minstralle took in mind,[2]
And said, "Ye are men unkind;
And, if I may, ye shall for-think[3]
Ye gave neither meat ne drink.
For gentlemen should bede,
To minstrels that abouten yede,
Of their meat, wine, and ale:
For los[4] rises of minstrale."
She was English, and well true,
By speech, and sight, and hide, and hue.

Having recognised the pretended palmers, she hastened to denounce them to the king of Almain, who immediately ordered them into his presence, and, accosting King Richard, "called him *taylard*, and said him shame;" and finally ordered

[1] This strange story is alluded to by Petrus d'Ebulo, a writer of the twelfth century, in his historical poem "De motibus Siculis, et rebus inter Henricum VI. et Tancredum gestis." It was edited by Samuel Engel, from a MS. in the library of Berne, which seems to have been presented to the emperor Henry VI. in the year 1196. Engel, in a note, quotes Otto de S. Blasio (a continuator of the Chronicle of Otho Frisigensis published by Urstitius) for the same story.

[2] Was offended. [3] Repent. [4] Reputation, glory.

that the pilgrims should be thrown into a dungeon, for having entered his dominions without leave and with a treasonable intention. It was in vain that Richard and his companions called Heaven to witness the purity of their conduct, remonstrated against the tyranny which doomed them to punishment, and invoked the laws universally prevalent in Christian countries for the protection of pilgrims returning from the Holy Land: their complaints only produced fresh orders for their more strict and severe confinement.

The king of Almain had a son named Ardour, much distinguished for his bodily strength, which he never missed an opportunity of displaying. He repaired to the prison; ordered the English knights to be brought forth; and, accosting Richard, asked if he would consent to stand a buffet from his hand, on the condition of being allowed to return it. This strange challenge was accepted; and the blow was so violent that Richard reeled under it, but recovered himself; and indignant at having exhibited a proof of weakness, which he attributed to hunger (for he had been debarred from food since his arrival in prison), sternly asked leave to defer his vengeance till the morrow. Ardour generously consented, and took his leave, after ordering a liberal supply of meat and wine for his hungry antagonist. The English monarch, having dined plentifully, passed the evening in *waxing his hand before the fire*, and retired to rest. Ardour was true to his appointment, and, presenting his face to the blow, fiercely exclaimed,

> "Smite, Richard, with all thy might,
> As thou art a true knight!
> And, if ever I stoop or held,
> I hope never to bear shield."

But unfortunately his powers of endurance were not equal to his courage; his cheek-bone was crushed by the blow; he sunk to the ground, and instantly expired.

When this fatal intelligence was conveyed to the king of Almain, he swooned with grief; and on his recovery gave way to such loud and clamorous lamentation, that the queen was alarmed by the outcry, and hastened to his presence where she was immediately apprised of her misfortune.

When the queen it understood,
For sorrow, certes, she was nigh wood.[1]
She gashed herself in the visage,
As a woman that would be rage:
The face foamed all of blood;
She rent the robe that she in stood;
Wrang her hands that she was born:
"In what manner is my son y-lorn?"
The king said, "I tell thee;
The knight here stands, he told it me."

The sad story was now circumstantially repeated; and the king, awakened to fresh transports of fury, gave strict orders that the prisoners should be closely fettered, and debarred from all food till the day of trial, when he hoped that the life of Richard would be sacrificed to his vengeance. But Providence had decreed that his obstinate injustice should continue to involve him in fresh calamity.

His daughter Margery, a princess of uncommon beauty, happened to resemble her brother Ardour in decision and impetuosity of character. Curious to behold the illustrious prisoner, she repaired, with three of her maidens, to the dungeon, and ordered that the English palmers should be brought before her. The jailor obeyed:

Forth he fette[2] Richard anon-right.
Fair he grette[3] that lady bright;
And said to her with heart free,
"What is thy will, lady, with me?"
When she saw him with eyen two,
Her love she cast upon him tho;
And said, "Richard! save God above,
Of all thing most I thee love!"
"Alas!" he said in that stound,
"With wrong am I brought to ground!
What might my love do to thee?
A poor prisoner, as thou may see;
This is that other day y-gone,
That meat ne drink ne had I none!"
The lady had of him pité.

[1] Mad. [2] Fetched. [3] Greeted.

Her pity indeed was most extensive. Not satisfied with ordering that the three victims of her father's cruelty should be abundantly supplied with all necessaries, she enjoined the jailor to bring Richard every evening to her chamber in the disguise of a squire. The complaisant officer faithfully obeyed her instructions, and Richard was left with the beautiful Margery, to meditate on the singularity of his destiny; which, after conducting him safely through all the perils of the Holy Land, had consigned him to a dungeon for neglecting to offer a piece of roasted goose to a minstrel; and had now transported him from his dungeon into the arms of a princess, to whose affections he was unconscious of having any claim, except that of killing her brother by a great blow on the cheek-bone.

As the secret of this amour had only been confided to three maidens and a jailor, Margery felt no apprehension of a discovery; but a week had scarcely elapsed when Richard, on leaving the apartment of his mistress, was recognised by a knight, who immediately conveyed the intelligence to the king. The offended monarch now sent in haste for his great council,

> Earls, barons, and wise clerks,
> To tell of these woeful werks—

and explaining to them his reasons for desiring the death of Richard, requesting them, if possible, to set aside the general law of Europe by which the persons of kings were declared inviolable, and to order the immediate punishment of the traitor. The council took the matter into their serious consideration, debating during three days, and concluded by declaring themselves incompetent to pass judgment: but one of them complaisantly recommended to the king a certain judge named Sir Eldrys, whose ingenuity in condemning prisoners was thought to be unparalleled, and who would probably suggest to his majesty the means of vengeance.

Sir Eldrys, recollecting that he had seen in the royal menagerie a lion of prodigious size and fierceness, advised that the animal should be kept during some days without food, and then introduced to the prisoner, whom he would be very likely to devour; so that his majesty, who could not be suspected of a secret intelligence with the lion, would obtain the gratification of his just revenge, without having infringed

the law, by passing sentence on a free and independent sovereign. This equitable project was of course adopted by the king; and immediate orders were issued for carrying it into execution.

Margery, who had her spies in the council, being apprised of what had passed, instantly sent for her lover; warned him of his danger; proposed to him the means of escape from her father's territories; and offered to accompany him in his flight,

> With gold and silver, and great tresore,
> Enough to have for evermore.
> Richard said, "I understand
> That were again the law of land,
> Away to wend withouten leave:
> The king ne will I nought so grieve.
> Of the lion ne give I nought;
> Him to slay now have I thought.
> By prime,[1] on the third day,
> I give thee his heart to prey."

He then directed her to repair to the prison, with forty handkerchiefs of white silk, on the evening before the combat; to order her supper in his cell; to invite his two friends and the jailor to the entertainment, and afterwards to pass the night with him: and the princess, without staying to inquire how far this conduct was compatible with that scrupulous regard for her father's peace of mind by which Richard professed to be actuated, punctually obeyed all his directions.

In the morning, the tender Margery, ever trembling for her lover's safety, and always fearless for her own, was with great difficulty persuaded to tear herself from the prison: but having at length returned to her apartment, Richard bound round his arm the silken handkerchiefs, and, recommending himself to God, calmly awaited the arrival of the lion.

The animal, attended by two keepers, and followed by the jailor, was then led in; and, as soon as he was loosed, sprang forwards to seize his prey. Richard, starting aside, evaded the attack, and at the same time gave the monster such a blow on the breast with his fist as nearly felled him to the ground. The lion, lashing himself with his tail, and extend-

[1] The first quarter of the artificial day.

ing his dreadful paws, now uttered a most hideous roar, and prepared for a more violent assault; but the hero, seizing his opportunity when the monster's jaws were extended, suddenly darted on him, drove his arm down the throat, and, grasping the heart, forcibly tore it out through the mouth together with a part of the entrails. Then, after piously returning thanks to Heaven for his miraculous victory, he snatched up the bleeding heart, and without meeting with any obstacle, marched with his trophy into the great hall of the palace.

The king at meat sat on des,
With dukes and earls proud in press.
The saler[1] on the table stood:
Richard pressed out all the blood,
And wet the heart in the salt;
(The king and all his men behalt,)
Withouten bread the heart he ate.
The king wonder'd, and said skeet:[2]
"Y-wis, as I understand can,
This is a devil, and no man,
That has my strong lion y-slawe,
The heart out of his body drawe,
And has it eaten with good will!
He may be called, by right skill,
King y-christened of most renown,
Strong Richard Cœur de Lion!"

The disappointment of his hopes of vengeance afflicted the king of Almain even beyond the loss of his son and the disgrace of his daughter; but as it was no longer possible to detain a prisoner who seemed to enjoy the particular favour of Providence, he determined to exact, for his release, a most exorbitant ransom. This was no less than the half of all the church plate contained in Richard's dominions: and as he deemed it impossible for any sovereign to levy a tribute of this nature, he was much surprised when the hard conditions were accepted without hesitation. Richard only asked for a clerk who should undertake to write a letter to his chancellor and the two archbishops, and for a trusty messenger who should convey it to England. His orders were received with the utmost submission, and executed with punctuality; and

[1] Salt-cellar; *salière*, Fr. [2] Immediately, quickly.

the king of Almain, after receiving the ransom, being summoned to release his prisoners, replied,

"——I give them leave;
I ne shall them no more grieve."
He took his daughter by the hand,
And bade her swithe devoid his land.
The queen saw what should fall;
Her daughter she gan to her chamber call,
And said, "Thou shalt dwell with me,
Till King Richard send after thee,
As a king does after his queen;
So I rede that it shall bene."

Margery, therefore, being unable to withstand the reasons and authority of her mother, took a mournful leave of Richard, who, we hope, was equally affected at this separation from his mistress.

The English monarch and his two companions were received with transports of joy, and the first six months which followed their arrival presented one constant scene of festivity. At the end of this time Richard summoned a parliament, to which he invited not only his nobility and clergy, but also deputies from all the towns and representatives of all the freeholds in his dominions, for the purpose of communicating and recommending to them a bull which he had received from Pope Urban. He stated to them that the whole country of Surry (Syria), and all which had been gained in former crusades, was now betrayed to the Saracens by two renegades, the Earl Joyce, and the Marquis of Montferrand; that Milon, the son and successor of Earl Baldwin, was expelled; that the Christian pilgrims were prevented from visiting the Holy Land; that the pope had therefore recommended a general crusade against the infidels; that the king of France and the emperor of Germany, with all their vassals, had already obeyed the summons; and that he was resolved to follow their example, and hoped that his piety would be seconded by that of his faithful subjects.

Richard's exhortation was completely successful; the assembly was unanimous in promising their assistance; and he was soon enabled to equip a formidable navy of two hundred large ships, laden with troops, stores, and military engines.

Amongst the instruments of offence little known to modern warfare were *bee-hives*, which were so numerous as to occupy no less than thirteen vessels. The fleet being assembled, the king gave his instructions to master Alain Trenchemer, the admiral, that he should protect, to the utmost of his power, the persons and property of all Christians; that he should give no quarter to the Saracens; and that he should proceed with all possible dispatch to Marseilles, where he would wait the arrival of the land-forces.

"For I, and my knights of main,
Will hastily wend through Almain,
To speak with Modard the king;
To wete why, and for what thing,
That he me in prison held.
But he my treasure again yield,
That he of me took with falsehede,
I shall quiten him his meed!"

As the various objects which he had in view could not but occasion some delay, Richard dispatched in the first instance, Baldwin, archbishop of Canterbury, with a part of his army, with orders to take the route of Brindisi and Constantinople; and to join, if possible, the Christian powers in Palestine. He then provided the necessary measures for securing the tranquillity of his dominions during his absence; appointed the chancellor archbishop of York his immediate representative; caused the officers of justice to take the oaths of allegiance to that prelate; and having received the sacrament, and requested the prayers of his subjects for the success of the expedition, passed with one hundred and twenty thousand men into Flanders.

This vast army was formed into three divisions, one of which was commanded by Sir Fulk Doyley, another by Sir Thomas de Moulton; and the third by Richard in person. The strictest orders were issued that all the articles wanted by the army should be fairly purchased; and, for the better prevention of plunder and the greater ease of the countries through which they passed, the three divisions were directed to march at the distance of ten miles asunder, the king taking charge of the centre. In this order he arrived at Cologne, a city belonging to his enemy, the inhabitants of which had

been enjoined by their sovereign not to furnish at any price a single article of food to the invaders. Richard, unwilling to use violence, determined that his troops should be fed with such provisions as could be supplied from his own magazines.

"Now, steward, I warne thee,
Buy us vessel[1] great plenté,
Dishes, cuppes, and saucers,
Bowls, trays, and platters,
Vats, tuns, and costret;[2]
Maketh our meat withouten let,
Whether ye will seeth or brede.[3]
And the poor men all, so God you spede,
That ye find in the town,
That they come at my summoun."

He also invited the mayor to dinner; and, inquiring after the king, was informed that he was then at a place called Gumery, together with his queen and the fair Margery, from whom some tidings might be soon expected.

Then, as it was law of land,
A messenger there com ridand
Upon a steed white so milk;
His trappings were of tuely[4] silk,
With five hundred bells ringand,
Well fair of sight I understand.
Down off his steed he 'light,
And grette King Richard fair, I plight.
"The king's daughter, that is so free,
She greets thee well by me;
With an hundred knights, and mo,
She comes, ere you to bed go."

Richard, full of confidence in the fair Margery's punctuality, rewarded the messenger for his good news with the present of a cloth of gold, and was soon gratified by the arrival of his mistress. In the morning, the lovers again parted, and the army proceeded on its march to a city called *Marburette*, where they found a renewal of their difficulties with respect to provisions.

[1] *Vaisselle*, Fr. all the appurtenances of the table.
[2] The same as *costrell*; a drinking-vessel. [3] Boil or roast.
[4] Red or scarlet. See Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 894.

His marshal swithe com him to;
"Sire," he said, "how shall we do?
Swilk fowaile[1] as we bought yesterday
For no catel[2] get I ne may!"
Richard answered with heart free,
"Of fruit here is great plenté,
Figges, raisins in frayel,[3]
And nuts may serven us full well,
And wax some-deal cast thereto;
Tallow and grease menge[4] also;
And thus ye may our meat make,
Sith ye may none other take."

King Modard, who was well acquainted with Richard's inviolable attachment to his word, and his respect for the laws and customs of foreign countries, but was totally ignorant of his resources in the art of cookery, had hoped that the precautions he had taken in stopping the supply of the markets would infallibly arrest the progress of the English army, and had neglected to adopt any further measures for his safety. He therefore learnt with astonishment and dismay that his enemy was arrived at *Carpentras*, and had taken his lodging at the very inn which, a few years before, had exhibited the fatal adventure of the roasted goose. No resource now remained but to implore the mediation of his daughter; and the good-natured Margery readily undertook to procure the forgiveness of Richard, in return for her father's absolute and unconditional submission. The conqueror required nothing more than the restoration of the ransom so unjustly extorted from him; and these terms being thankfully accepted, the two monarchs exchanged the kiss of peace, and their reconciliation was followed, as usual, by a magnificent entertainment.

The enjoyment of perfect security after the horrible fright which he had lately experienced, aided perhaps by the effect of a plentiful dinner, produced in Modard such a paroxysm of valour, that, on Richard's requesting the loan of a hundred knights to join the crusade, he proposed to take the cross in person, and to contribute his own heroism to the success of the expedition: and his guest having declined to accept an offer attended with so much risk to his sacred person, he in-

[1] Fuel, i. e. provisions. [2] Money. [3] *Fraiau*, Fr. the baskets in which figs and raisins are packed. [4] Mix.

sisted on proving his generosity, not only by the magnificent equipment of a hundred knights, but by a further present of inestimable value:

> Another thing I shall thee give,
> That may thee help while that thou live.
> Two riche rings of gold;
> The stones therein be full bold.
> Hence, to the land of Ind,
> Better than they shalt thou none find.
> For, whoso hath that one stone,
> Water ne shall him drench none.
> That other stone whoso that bear,
> Fire ne shall him never dere.[1]

The rings, of course, were thankfully accepted; and Richard, after taking an affectionate leave of Modard and of the tender Margery, departed with his army to Marseilles.

Here he found his fleet in readiness; and, embarking with a fair wind, arrived, after a short voyage, at Messina, where he disembarked his troops, and found the king of France encamped with his forces. The two monarchs embraced with mutual expressions of regard, and even contracted the engagement of brotherhood in arms; but Philip, already jealous of a competitor by whom he was far surpassed in military glory, meditated treachery. He wrote to Tancred, then king of Apulia, to insinuate that Richard, under pretence of joining the crusade, was contriving an attack upon his dominions; and though Tancred, having communicated this letter to his son Roger, was persuaded by him to have an interview with Richard, in which his suspicions were finally removed, the fiery temper of the English monarch, who was highly indignant at such an unjust charge, was scarcely restrained from producing the rupture which it had been Philip's object to insure. At length the French king's treachery being made manifest, Tancred and Richard parted with mutual expressions of esteem.

The English army was encamped without the walls of Messina. The French took up their quarters in the town, and, artfully awakening the suspicion of the inhabitants (whom the author calls Griffons, *i. e.* Greeks), at length incited them, by

[1] Hurt. From the Anglo-Saxon.

the promise of protection, to frequent acts of hostility against the English. Richard, after complaining to Philip, who gave him no other answer than that he was at liberty to seek such redress as he thought fit, determined on revenge. While he was eating his Christmas dinner, he received information that the wicked Griffons had renewed their insults; and kicking down the table with his foot, a practice by which he usually expressed his displeasure, gave orders for an immediate attack on the town, and put himself at the head of his troops. A short but severe conflict ensued, in which the earl of Salisbury acquired the distinguished title of Longue-espée. But though the inhabitants were driven back, the town was too strong to be taken by such a summary process. Richard, determined to punish the Griffons, summoned all his officers, ordered his fleet to co-operate with the land forces, and directed his most formidable engines of war to be directed against the walls—

"I have a castel, I understond,
Is made of timber of Englond,
With six stages full of tourelles,[1]
Well flourished with cornelles;[2]
Therein I and many a knight
Against the French shall take the fight;
That castel shall have a sorry nom;
It shall be hight the Mate-Griffon."

The assault was irresistible: under a general discharge of arrows and *quarelles*, one of the gates was forced by Richard in person; the town was for a short time given up to pillage; and its total destruction was only averted by the humblest submissions on the part of Philip, and by the intercession of an archbishop. The author however informs us that two French justices, called Margaryte and Sir Hugh Impetyte, took an opportunity, during the parley, of reviling Richard, whom they called a *taylard;* and that the choleric monarch instantly clove the skull of the first, and nearly killed the second; after which he calmly returned to his camp.

Philip left Messina in the month of March, and Richard prepared to follow him to Acres at the end of Lent: but four of his ships, principally loaded with treasure, were wrecked on the coast of Cyprus; and the king, arriving three days

[1] Turrets. [2] Embrasures.

afterwards, was informed that the *emperor* of the island had unjustly seized all the treasure, and committed the crews of his ships to prison. On this intelligence he sent three of his barons with a most haughty message, to demand the instant restitution of men and money, and to denounce the most signal vengeance if the compliance with his demands should be delayed for a moment. The emperor, scarcely less choleric than Richard himself, began his reply by throwing a knife at Sir Robert Turnham, which he with some difficulty avoided, and concluded it by ordering them to carry to "their tayled king" his refusal and defiance.

The emperor's steward, who was present at the audience, was of opinion that this mode of treating ambassadors was highly indecorous; and, though probably well acquainted with the violence of his master's temper, very unguardedly ventured to express his disapprobation. The monarch, forcing a smile, while his eyes sparkled with rage, made a signal to his steward that he wished to communicate something to him in secret; and, while the unsuspecting minister waited on his knees the expected revelation, drew suddenly a knife from its sheath, and cut off his nose.[1]

> The steward his nose hent;
> I-wys, his visage was y-shent!
> Quickly out of the castel ran;
> Leave he took of no man;

and having overtaken the ambassadors, he begged that they would represent his case to the king, and induce him to come on shore that very night; promising to deliver into their hands the keys of all the principal forts in the island; to aid their enterprise with a body of one hundred knights; and to bring to Richard the young and beautiful daughter of the uncourteous emperor.

Richard was playing at chess with the earl of Richmond in his galley, when he received all this good news. Without loss of time, he gave orders for the disembarkation; put on

[1] Roger de Hoveden almost confirms this anecdote.—He says, that while the emperor was sitting at dinner together with his barons, one of them advised him, in the name of all, to make peace with Richard; whereupon, the emperor, greatly enraged at this discourse, struck the speaker with a knife, and cut off his nose. After dinner, the person so treated set off for England.

his armour; took in his hands the formidable battle-axe which he had caused to be made for the destruction of the Saracens; took the town of Lymasour by assault; broke down with his own hand the doors of the prison where his men were confined; and made himself ample amends, by the pillage of the citizens, for the loss of his treasure.

This success was so sudden, that the emperor, who was at some distance from the town, had only time to collect the few troops which were within reach, and to encamp them for the night, after sending in all directions for succours, with which he hoped to face the enemy on the following day. In the mean while the punctual steward repaired to Richard with the keys, the hundred knights, and the young lady; at the same time promising to conduct the English army by an unsuspected road into the midst of the emperor's camp; and the king, after suitable acknowledgments for his various services,

—— swore by God, our saviour,
His nose should be bought well sour.

As the success of his enterprise depended solely on dispatch, he selected from his army one thousand well-mounted knights, put himself at their head, and, marching rapidly by moonlight under the guidance of the steward, arrived before day-break so near the enemy as to discover the position of the emperor's tent, which was very conspicuous from the rich silks of which it was formed, as well as from its being surmounted by a heron of burnished gold. The invaders being now discovered, and the alarm rapidly spreading through the camp, they rushed forward towards this tent; overset all who attempted to oppose them; made a slaughter of twenty thousand vile Griffons; but arrived too late to seize the emperor, who had made his escape on the first alarm. But the booty taken in the field was immense; the imperial pavilion, which was immediately embarked and carried to Acres as a trophy, was itself a treasure; the plate alone was a full indemnification for all that the English had lost; besides which, Richard became master of two beautiful steeds which he considered as invaluable, the celebrated Favel and Lyard—

In the world was not their peer;
Dromedary, nor destrere,[1]

[1] A war-horse. See Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 300.

Steed nabyte, ne camayl
That ran so swift sans fail.
For a thousand pounds of gold
Should not that one be sold.

The emperor now found, on reviewing the events of the last twenty-four hours, that, by cutting off his steward's nose, he had lost his daughter, his capital, his army, and his treasure; and very wisely concluded that he could only hope to save what remained of his territory by unconditional submission. He therefore sent an embassy to the English monarch, offering to become his vassal and do him homage, on the sole condition of being left in peace and quiet; and Richard, considering that the restoration of the steward's face was quite hopeless, graciously condescended to accept the terms, after the full restitution of the pillage committed on his ships. Accordingly the emperor, publicly falling on his knees before the king, embraced his feet, humbly asked for mercy, and received assurances of future protection. The remainder of the day was dedicated to festivity, and the vassal emperor was magnificently entertained at the table of his sovereign. But, on his return to his palace, it unfortunately occurred to him, that if his former violence had made him hateful, his late meanness and cowardice had rendered him contemptible: he therefore once more changed his mind, and, regardless of the oaths which he had just taken, summoned his barons, and requested their assistance to rescue his dominions from the indignity of being subject to a foreign tyrant. This act of treachery was immediately communicated to the conqueror, by whom the emperor, after being abandoned by his subjects, was now ordered into irons, and transported on board a galley for the purpose of being conveyed as a prisoner to Acres.

Richard now prepared for his grand expedition, and, having confided the government of Cyprus to the Earl of Leicester, set sail for Syria with a fleet of two hundred transports under convoy of fifteen well-armed galleys. For the first ten days the weather was perfectly favourable; but on the eleventh they met with a violent storm, during which it was difficult to prevent the dispersion of the armament. At length the sky cleared, and they discovered in the offing a *dromound*, or ship of burthen of vast size, and laden nearly to the water's

edge. Alain Trenchemer was dispatched, in a light vessel, to inquire whither she was bound, whose property she was, and what was her cargo? and was answered by a *latimer* (an interpreter) that she came from Apulia, was laden with provisions for the use of the French army, and was bound to Acres. But Alain, perceiving only one man on deck who answered his questions, insisted on seeing the rest of the crew, whom he suspected to be Saracens; and after a few evasions on the part of the latimer, the whole ship's company suddenly came upon deck, and answered him by a general shout of defiance. Alain hastily returned with this report to the king; who, arming himself with all expedition, threw himself into a galley, and ordered his rowers to make every possible exertion.

> "Roweth on fast! Who that is faint,
> In evil water may he be dreynt!"
> They rowed hard, and sung thereto
> With hevelow and rumbeloo.

Richard's impatience being thus seconded by the zeal of his men, the galley flew like an arrow from a cross-bow; and Alain steered the vessel with such skill, that, encountering the stern of the dromound, it cut off a considerable part of her quarter. The king made every effort to board; but the deck was covered with well-armed Saracens; and others from the "top castles" assaulted the galley with such showers of heavy stones, that Richard was in the most imminent danger. At length, seven more galleys being detached to his assistance, and the enemies attacked in every direction, he sprang on board of the dromound, and, setting his back against the mast, clove many of the Saracens to the middle, cut off the heads of others, and amputated arms and legs in every direction; till the unbelievers, who at first consisted of sixteen hundred men, were reduced to thirty.

> The king found in the dromound, sans fail,
> Mickle store, and great vitail;
> Many barrels full of fire-gregeys;[1]
> And many thousand bow Turkeis;
> Hooked arrows, and quarelles.
> They found there full many barrels

[1] Greek fire.

Of wheat, and wine great plenté;
Gold and silver, and ilke daintey.
Of treasure he had not half the mound
That in the dromound was y-found,
For it drowned in the flood,
Ere half uncharged were that good.

After this important capture, which greatly contributed to decide the fate of Acres, the English fleet proceeded on their voyage to Syria; but were met off the coast by a spy, who reported that the harbour had lately been rendered inaccessible, by means of a vast chain of iron which the Saracens had stretched across the entrance. Richard immediately resolved to begin his career of glory by overcoming this unexpected obstacle. Selecting the largest and strongest galley in the fleet, he filled it with his stoutest rowers; took his station on the bows of the vessel, which was urged by the united force of sails and oars; ordered Trenchemer to direct it against the centre of the chain; and, watching the moment of its utmost extension, struck it so violently with his battle-axe that it gave way, and yielded a passage to the whole fleet, which passed into the harbour amidst the acclamations of the sailors.

The first night of their arrival was passed in rejoicings. Wine, piment, and claré, were circulated in abundance; trumpets, tabours, and Saracen horns sounded continually; wild fire was thrown up into the sky; Greek fire scattered over the sea; various illuminations were exhibited; and the mangonels and other military engines, among which was a very extraordinary *wind-mill*, were displayed for the purpose of striking terror into the enemy.

On the following morning Richard received the congratulations of the king of France, of the Emperor, and of all the Christian princes assembled at the siege; after which the archbishop of Pisa paid him a private visit in his tent, and related to him very circumstantially all the military operations which had taken place during the preceding seven years. By this it appeared that, the Saracens being in possession of all the strong posts in the country, it had been necessary for the Christians in the first instance to fortify their camp; which they did with great labour, digging a wide and deep ditch, protected at intervals by barbicans of solid masonry: that

Saladin, with a vast army, had immediately besieged them in this intrenchment: that the Christians had made a sally, in which, after an obstinate conflict, they appeared to have the advantage, till, a number of their knights being engaged in the pursuit of a horse magnificently caparisoned, the Saracens turned and defeated them, with the loss of the emperor of Germany, Earl Janin of *Playnspagne*, Earl Ferrers of England, and eleven thousand men: that Saladin, having cast the dead bodies into the reservoir from which the Christians drew their supply of water, had occasioned a pestilence in their camp, which carried off no less than forty thousand: that twelve hundred of their best knights had lost their lives in a naval enterprise, intended to surprise a vessel laden with wheat and other necessaries for the supply of the Saracen army: that fifteen thousand had fallen, through a stratagem of the garrison of Acres, who, affecting to despise the Christians, had established a camp at some distance from the town, which they filled with articles of value, and thus decoyed the Christians to an attack; but, returning to the charge as soon as the assailants were encumbered with the booty, defeated them with great slaughter: that after this the Christians had again recovered a temporary superiority by the arrival of the earls of Champagne and Bretagne with their forces, and afterwards by that of Baldwin archbishop of Canterbury, with his nephew Hubert Gauter, together with Randolph de Glanville, John the Neal, his brother Miles, and other English knights; but that even these succours had barely supplied the vacancy occasioned by the inclemency of the seasons, and by a dreadful famine in which sixty thousand Christians had perished.

King Richard wept with his eyen both,
And thus he said to him for sooth:
"Sir Bishop, bid thou for us,
That might me send sweet Jesus
His foes all to destroy,
That they no more us annoy!"
King Richard took leave, and lept on steed—

He rode round the intrenchment, and, having carefully surveyed the ground, made choice of an eminence near St. Thomas's hospital for the position of his "Mate-Griffon." This was a wooden tower of great magnitude, the framework

of which had occupied thirteen ships. From its top he was enabled to discover all the defences of the garrison; and having fixed a mangonel in a proper direction, he ordered his music to sound the signal of assault, and caused his bee-hives to be thrown from the mangonel among the besieged. At the same time he set up his "Robinet," a more powerful species of mangonel, which continued to discharge stones of enormous size against the works, and instructed his miners to direct their mines against "*Maudit-Coloun*," a fortification which protected one side of the city; while, from the summit of the Mate-Griffon, he watched the motions of the besieged, and gave a proper direction to the showers of darts which were incessantly discharged by his archers. The Saracens were particularly annoyed by the bees, which molested them on every side.

And said, "King Richard was full fell,
When his flies biten so well!"

The confusion was such that they knew not on which side to turn their attention. Great numbers were slaughtered; much of the outer wall was ruined by the miners; and the danger became so pressing, that the garrison were employed during great part of the night in making fires in the highest parts of the town as signals of distress.

Saladin, who was encamped at ten miles distance, immediately marched to their succour. His cavalry was formed in four divisions, marshalled under their respective standards. The first was red, bearing three griffons, and a bend azure; the second green, exhibiting a contest between a dragon and a lion; the third blue, without any device; the fourth white, with three Saracens' heads sable. This last was commanded by Sir Saladin in person, accompanied by his nephew Mirayn-Momelyn. The four divisions of knights or horsemen amounted to three hundred and six thousand, and they were attended by sixty thousand infantry, bearing rushes and hay in bundles, for the purpose of filling up the ditch of the Christian camp.

Richard was at this time confined to his tent by a fever, in consequence of the fatigue to which he devoted himself in that dangerous climate; and the want of such a leader was near being fatal to the Christians. But Philip, though surprised by the suddenness of the attack, which menaced him on every quarter, conducted the defence with such ability that

the Saracens, after an obstinate conflict in which many men were killed on both sides, were ultimately compelled to retire. Some of their number, who by the impetuosity of the first assault had penetrated within the intrenchments, were taken prisoners, and instantly put to death.

The best leeches in the camp were unable to effect the cure of Richard's ague; but the prayers of the army were more successful. He became convalescent, and the first symptom of his recovery was a violent longing for pork. But pork was not likely to be plentiful in a country whose inhabitants had an abhorrence for swine's flesh; and

—— though his men should be hanged,
They ne might, in that countrey,
For gold, ne silver, ne no money,
No pork find, take, ne get,
That King Richard might aught of eat.
An old knight, with Richard biding,
When he heard of that tiding,
That the kingis wants were swyche,
To the steward he spake privyliche.
" Our lord the king sore is sick, i-wis,
After pork he alonged is;
Ye may none find to selle:
No man be hardy him so to telle!
If he did, he might die.
Now behoves him to done as I shall say,
That he wete nought of that.
Take a Saracen young and fat,
In haste let the thief be slain,
Opened, and his skin off flayn;
And sodden, full hastily,
With powder, and with spicery,
And with saffron of good colour.
When the king feels thereof savour,
Out of ague if he be went,
He shall have thereto good talent.[1]
When he has a good taste,
And eaten well a good repast,
And supped of the brewis[2] a sup,
Slept after, and swet a drop,

[1] Will; desire. [2] Broth.

Thorough Godis help, and my counsail,
Soon he shall be fresh and hail."
The sooth to say, at wordes few,
Slain and sodden was the heathen shrew.
Before the king it was forth brought.
Quod his men, "Lord, we have pork sought;
Eates and suppes of the brewis soote,[1]
Thorough grace of God it shall be your boot."[2]
Before King Richard carff a knight.
He ate faster than he carve might.
The king ate the flesh, and gnew[3] the bones,
And drank well after for the nonce.
And when he had eaten enough,
His folk hem turned away, and lough.[4]
He lay still, and drew in his arm;
His chamberlain him wrapped warm.
He lay and slept, and swet a stound,
And became whole and sound.
King Richard clad him, and arose,
And walked abouten in the close.

In the mean time the Christians had continued to act on the defensive, and Saladin to harass them by daily assaults; so that Richard heard with astonishment and indignation the cries of the enemy at no great distance from his tent. He instantly called for his armour, sprang upon his horse, grasped his battle-axe, rushed upon the Saracens, and killed with his own hands all who ventured to oppose him; while his troops, confident of victory under his direction, closely followed him through the ranks of the enemies, and spread slaughter and desolation round them. Saladin, astonished at the impetuosity of an attack, which he had not foreseen, from a dispirited and nearly vanquished enemy, was at length compelled to sound a retreat; and, with the loss of his whole rear-guard, to resume his old position near the town of Gage, at ten miles distance from the field of battle. The Christians, wearied with slaughter, returned to their camp; and Richard, though fully aware of the extent of his success, stationed his guards with the same exactness as if the enemy had still menaced his intrenchments.

[1] Sweet. [2] Help. [3] Gnawed. [4] Laughed.

When King Richard had rested a whyle,
A knight his arms gan unlace,
Him to comfort and solace.
Him was brought a sop in wine.
"The head of that ilke swine
That I of ate!" (the cook he bade)
"For feeble I am, and faint, and mad.
Of mine evil now I am fear;
Serve me therewith at my soupere!"
Quod the cook, "That head I ne have."
Then said the king, "So God me save,
But I see the head of that swine,
For sooth, thou shalt lesen thine!"
The cook saw none other might be;
He fet the head, and let him see.
He fell on knees, and made a cry,
"Lo here the head! my lord, mercy!"

The cook had certainly some reason to fear that his master would be struck with horror at the recollection of the dreadful banquet to which he owed his recovery, but his fears were soon dissipated.

The swarte vis[1] when the king seeth,
His black beard, and white teeth,
How his lippes grinned wide,
"What devil is this?" the king cried,
And gan to laugh as he were wode.
"What? is Saracen's flesh thus good?
That, never erst, I nought wist!
By Godes death, and his up-rist,
Shall we never die for default,
While we may, in any assault,
Slee Saracens, the flesh may take,
And seethen, and rosten, and do hem bake,
And gnawen her flesh to the bones!
Now I have proved it once,
For hunger ere I be wo,
I and my folk shall eat mo!"

On the following day, Richard renewed the assault on the city; and the besieged, having no further hope of succour,

[1] Black face.

humbly demanded a parley. A latimer was dispatched to the kings of France and England, with instructions to offer on the part of Saladin the surrender of Acres, with the whole of Syria, as far as the river Jordan, on condition that the Christians should pay to the sultan a yearly tribute of ten thousand bezants; or that they should consent, in lieu of this tribute, to invest the marquis of Montferrand with the sovereignty of the ceded countries. Richard could no longer repress his fury. The marquis, he said, was a traitor, who had robbed the knights hospitallers of sixty thousand pounds, the present of his father Henry; that he was a renegade, whose treachery had occasioned the loss of Acres; and he concluded by a solemn oath, that he would cause him to be drawn to pieces by wild horses, if he should ever venture to pollute the Christian camp by his presence. Philip attempted to intercede in favour of the marquis, and, throwing down his glove, offered to become a pledge for his fidelity to the Christians; but his offer was rejected, and he was obliged to give way to Richard's impetuosity. The latimer then proposed the surrender of the town, on the sole condition of safety and immunity to the inhabitants; that all the public treasure, arms and military machines should become the property of the victors, together with a further ransom of one hundred thousand bezants; and that the holy cross should be immediately restored; the garrison remaining prisoners of war till the full performance of these conditions. Richard having declared himself satisfied, the capitulation received the assent of the other Christian princes, and they took possession of the town. The booty shared by the victors was enormous; numbers of Christian captives were liberated; and among the rest fifteen knights of distinction, whom Richard immediately took into pay, after liberally supplying them with arms, clothing, and money, from his share of the plunder.

Though the garrison had faithfully performed the other articles of their contract, they were unable to restore the cross which was not in their possession; and were therefore treated by the Christians with great cruelty. Daily reports of their sufferings were carried to Saladin; and as many of them were persons of the highest distinction, that monarch, at the solicitation of their friends, dispatched an embassy to King Richard with magnificent presents, which he offered for the ransom of

the captives. The ambassadors were persons the most respectable from their age, their rank, and their eloquence; they delivered their message in terms of the utmost humility; and, without arraigning the justice of the conqueror in his severe treatment of their countrymen, only solicited a period to that severity; laying at his feet the treasures with which they were intrusted, and pledging themselves and their master for the payment of any further sums which he might demand as the price of mercy.

King Richard spake with wordes mild,
"The gold to take God me shield!
Among you partes[1] every charge.
I brought in shippes and in barge,
More gold and silver with me,
Than has your lord, and swilke[2] three.
To his treasure I have no need!
But, for my love, I you bid,
To meat with me that ye dwell;
And afterward I shall you tell.
Thorough counsel I shall you answer,
What bode[3] ye shall to your lord bear."

The invitation was gratefully accepted. Richard in the mean time gave secret orders to his marshal that he should repair to the prison, select a certain number of the most distinguished captives, and, after carefully noting their names on a roll of parchment, cause their heads to be instantly struck off: that these heads should be delivered to the cook, with instructions to clear away the hair, and, after boiling them in a caldron, to distribute them on several platters, one to each guest, observing to fasten on the forehead of each the piece of parchment expressing the name and family of the victim:

"An hot head bring me beforn,
As I were well apayed[4] withall,
Eat thereof fast I shall;
As it were a tender chick,
To see how the others will like."

This horrible order was punctually executed. At noon the guests were summoned to wash by the music of the waits;

[1] Divide. [2] Such. [3] Message. [4] Pleased.

the king took his seat, attended by the principal officers of his court, at high table, and the rest of the company were marshalled at a long table below him. On the cloth were placed portions of salt at the usual distances, but neither bread, wine, nor water. The ambassadors, rather surprised at this omission, but still free from apprehension, awaited in silence the arrival of the dinner, which was announced by the sound of pipes, trumpets, and tabours; and beheld, with horror and dismay, the unnatural banquet introduced by the steward and his officers. Yet their sentiments of disgust and abhorrence, and even their fears, were for a time suspended by their curiosity. Their eyes were fixed on the king, who, without the slightest change of countenance, swallowed the morsels as fast as they could be supplied by the knight who carved them.

> Every man then poked other;
> They said, "This is the devil's brother,
> That slays our men, and thus hem eats!"

Their attention was then involuntarily fixed on the smoking heads before them; they traced in the swoln and distorted features the resemblance of a friend or near relation; and received from the fatal scroll which accompanied each dish the sad assurance that this resemblance was not imaginary. They sat in torpid silence, anticipating their own fate in that of their countrymen; while their ferocious entertainer, with fury in his eyes, but with courtesy on his lips, insulted them by frequent invitations to merriment. At length this first course was removed, and its place supplied by venison, cranes, and other dainties, accompanied by the richest wines. The king then apologized to them for what had passed, which he attributed to his ignorance of their taste; and assured them of his religious respect for their character as ambassadors, and of his readiness to grant them a safe-conduct for their return. This boon was all that they now wished to claim; and

> King Richard spake to an old man,
> "Wendes home to your soudan!
> His melancholy that ye abate;
> And sayes that ye came too late.
> Too slowly was your time y-guessed;
> Ere ye came, the flesh was dressed,

That men shoulden serve with me,
Thus at noon, and my meynie.[1]
Say him, it shall him nought avail,
Though he for-bar[2] us our vitail,
Bread, wine, fish, flesh, salmon, and conger;
Of us none shall die with hunger,
While we may wenden to fight,
And slay the Saracens downright,
Wash the flesh and roast the head.
With oo[3] Saracen I may well feed
Well a nine or a ten
Of my good Christian men.
King Richard shall warrant,
There is no flesh so nourissant[4]
Unto an English man,
Partridge, plover, heron, ne swan,
Cow ne ox, sheep ne swine,
As the head of a Sarezyn.
There he is fat, and thereto tender;
And my men be lean and slender.
While any Saracen quick be,
Livand now in this Syrie,
For meat we will nothing care.
Abouten fast we shall fare,
And every day we shall eat
All so many as we may get.
To England will we nought gon,
Till they be eaten every one."

The ambassadors returned with this answer to Saladin, and repeated very exactly every circumstance of the dreadful scene which they had so lately witnessed; adding that the heads which they had been enabled to examine, belonged to the princes of Damascus, Nineveh, Persia, Samaria, Egypt, and Africa. Saladin heard the recital with indignation; but his council were struck with terror, and besought their sultan to procure if possible, by fresh solicitations and more splendid offers, the restoration of the captives who still remained in the hands of the Christians. A second embassy was therefore dispatched to Richard, with the offer of a fair partition of the

[1] Company. [2] Deprive. [3] One. [4] Nourishing.

—, every prisoner taken at Acres slou
The ambassador answered, that a complia
was impossible, because the cross could
Richard gave orders for the immediate
thousand captives.

They were led into the place ful
There they heard angels of heav
They said, "Seigneures, tuez[1] tu
Spares hem nought, and beheads
King Richard heard the angels' v
And thanked God, and the holy

The author of the romance considering
ducted on so grand a scale, at the expense
expressly enjoined by angels, could not fai
great pleasure to the reader, has here intro
episodical description of Spring:

Merry is, in time of May,
When fowlis sing in her lay.
Floweres on apple-trees and p
Small fowlis sing merry.
Ladies strew her bowers
With red roses and lilly flowe
Great joy is in frith[2] and lake;
Beast and bird plays with his
The damiseles lead dance;
Knights play with shield

it seems, at an entertainment which he gave to the Christian princes in honour of the capture of Acres, had distributed among the heralds, *disours*, *tabourers*, and *trompours*, who accompanied him, the greater part of the money, jewels, horses, and fine robes which had fallen to his share; and had bestowed allotments of land on his earls and barons; after which he strongly urged to Philip the necessity of following his example. The advice was, perhaps, very good: but good advice is an article whose value is not fixed by any known rate of exchange; and Philip, whose parsimony was not at all ostentatious, was offended by this public discussion of his character. Richard, however, no less prodigal of his instruction than of his money, continued to give him a variety of lessons for his guidance during the campaign which was about to recommence; insisting, above all, that he should never be tempted by any ransom to spare the life of an unbeliever, but should put to the sword without hesitation all the Saracens whom he should not be able to convert to Christianity. The result was, that Philip promised implicit obedience; but left the dinner with a fixed determination of acting, on every occasion, in direct opposition to the wishes of the king of England.

Such, indeed, is, in the opinion of our author, the general character of Frenchmen.

> The Frenche men be covetous.
> When they sit at a taverne,
> There they be stout and stern
> Boastful wordes for to crack,
> And of her deeds yelping[1] make.
> Little worth they are, and mickle proud.
> Fight they can with wordes loud,
> And tell no man is her peer;
> But, when they come to the myster,[2]
> And see men begin strokes deal,
> Anon they gunne[3] to turn her heel;
> And gunne to drawen in her horns,
> As a snail among the thorns.

Philip's first expedition was against the city of Taburette, of which he formed the blockade. The Saracens immediately

[1] Boasting. [2] Work, *métier*, Fr. [3] Begin.

inhabitants, returned with great milita

Richard, having reviewed the rem
army, found it to consist of one hundre
ten thousand infantry, besides the usua
Among the warriors who composed it v

—his eme' Henry of Cham
And his master Robert of I

Robert de Tourneham, Sir Fulk Doyley
and Sir Bertram, a valiant baron of Br
rangued the army, explaining to them t
of the war, and strictly enjoined them n
the apparent submission of an insidious
the sword, without mercy, all who shou
Christianity. He divided the forces in
purpose of undertaking at the same tim
Surry, Orglyous, and Ebedy; and, hav
the direction of the first, intrusted the se
the third to Doyley.

Richard, being arrived before the
every apparent preparation for a regula
sion of all the avenues to the gates; l
engines to bear on the walls; and disch
bows large flights of arrows upon the ga
survey soon convinced him that the v
attempted by escalade. He therefore
three thousand picked men, provided -

ively opposed them, and let down the draw-bridge, over which Richard, who had learned the success of his contrivance by the confusion observed among the besieged, instantly made his way, attended by Sir Robert de Tourneham, Robert of Leycester, and Sir Bertram. The whole army followed, and put the entire garrison together with the inhabitants to the sword.

Sir Thomas de Moulton was indebted, for his success against Castel Orglyous, to the sagacity with which he discovered and circumvented a stratagem of the enemy. A Christian renegade arrived in the English camp with the plausible story of his having escaped from prison, to which he had been confined on account of his faith, and with an offer of introducing the assailants, by a secure and unsuspected avenue, into the town. Sir Thomas, suspecting his treachery, gave instant orders that his ears should be slit, and that he should be hanged up by the heels in sight of the enemy; when the renegade, falling on his knees, confessed his intention, and explained the project contrived for the destruction of the Christians. It seems that under the draw-bridge of the town was a pit of great depth; and a trap-door in the bridge itself was so contrived as to open with the weight of a man, and to close again by a spring, after having precipitated the assailants into the abyss. The renegade added that the Saracens were much afraid of the English military engines, the dreadful effect of which had been fully proved at the siege of Acres: he therefore recommended that Sir Thomas should order some great stones to be discharged against the principal buildings, and pledged himself, if he might be permitted to re-enter the town, he would procure its immediate surrender. Lastly, he humbly petitioned that, if the English should become, through his means, masters of the town, Sir Thomas would be pleased to *grant him a boon;* which the general graciously promised. The renegade was now dismissed; the discharge of the *mangonels* was ordered; and the success of these measures was soon evinced by the arrival of deputies from the town with offers of unconditional surrender. Sir Thomas insisted that the treacherous pit should be immediately filled, and the draw-bridge removed; and his orders being readily obeyed, he took possession of the citadel. The renegade now came forward to claim his *boon;* which extended no further than to a request of mere subsistence during the

speedily be compelled to renou
laid a plot to murder Sir Thomas and
the night; and the English having i
the use

——of bread and wine,
Piment, clarry, good and fi
Of cranes, and swans, and
Patridges, plovers, and her
Of larks and small volatile,

were on the point of being sacrificed to
infidels. But the new convert, suspecti
former associates, fortunately detected the
of its intended execution, and carried th
Thomas, who revenged the attempt by
slaughter of all the inhabitants.

The siege of Ebedy, which had been i
Doyley, presented far greater difficulties,
at least equal in number to the attacking
mangonels, however, were so well serve
towers were nearly ruined; and the brea
ticable, Sir Fulk ordered his army to the
now discovered that the depth of the ditc
the walls, still presented an insuperable
ants were slaughtered in great numbers, a
sary to sound a retreat. Sir Fulk then c
fascines, with which, and rubbish, the dit
the military engines were b——

His little army looked also with much attention, and some alarm, at the military pomp of sixty amirals, and a far-stretched body of brilliant cavalry, whose numbers, when computed by their fear, amounted to at least eighty thousand. But Sir Fulk, having represented to them that victory is in the hands of Heaven, fell on his knees, and after a short prayer, in which he was joined by the troops, seizing the moment of their enthusiasm, led them on to battle. The Saracens, whose general Sir Arcade was killed by Sir Fulk, were at length routed; their retreat towards the town was intercepted; and such as escaped the swords of the soldiers were knocked down and killed by the "foot-folk and simple knaves" of the English camp, who displayed great activity in destroying and stripping the fugitives:

No man would the dogs bury;
Christian men rested, and made hem merry;
Of good wine ilk man drank a draught,
And when that they heart had caught,
Cooled hem, and keeped her state,
Anon they broke the town gate.

Here, of course, the slaughter recommenced. Men, women, and children, were indiscriminately put to death, and the town given up to pillage; after which Sir Fulk, having left a garrison in the place, marched to join Sir Thomas at Castel Orglyous, and proceeded with him to the royal army at Sudan Surry, from whence they returned with Richard to the general rendezvous at Acres.

It was requisite to spend some time in this city for the purpose of curing the wounded, and of recruiting the strength of the army after their fatigues; and the interval was employed in feasts in honour of their victories. At one of these entertainments, Richard proposed that each general should relate the events of the expedition he commanded; and set the example by reciting the slaughter of the infidels at Sudan Surry. Sir Thomas and Sir Fulk no less successfully vindicated themselves from any imputation of remorse or pity for the vanquished Saracens; the latter observing,

"Gayned[1] hem no mercy cry:
What should dogges do but die?
All the folk hopped head-less;[2]
In this manner I made peace."

[1] It availed them. [2] Without their heads.

The king of France next told of his having reduced the towns of Taburette and Archane; but when he was forced to confess that both places were inhabited by infidels, he was severely rebuked by Richard, who represented to him that his newly acquired subjects would soon be seen among the foremost of his enemies; and that, for the gratification of his own avarice, he had, by his pretended mercy, endangered the success of the common cause. A new expedition was now undertaken against both towns; and at both Philip was received, as Richard had predicted, with contempt and defiance: but the French army was now accompanied by that of the English, and of all the Christian powers; and the resistance of the Saracen garrisons only led to their utter destruction.

Philip, though he partook largely of the profit, had little share in the glory of this expedition; and his wounded pride led him to thwart, on every future occasion, the measures of his too illustrious rival. This disunion of the chiefs was soon manifested by its consequences.

The united army next proceeded towards Cayphas, following the sea-coast, for the purpose of receiving the necessary supplies by water.

> Against hem comen her navey,
> Cogges[1], and dromounds, many galley,
> Barges, schoutes, trayeres fele[2],
> That were charged with all weal,
> With armour, and with other vitail,
> That nothing in the host should fail.

The weather was intensely hot; their march, it should seem, rather disorderly; and this disorder was much increased by an accident,

> Thorough a cart, that was Hubert's Gautire,
> That was set al in a mire.

Saladin, always watchful and enterprising, had followed the Christians at no great distance with a chosen body of cavalry, and being informed by his spies of their temporary confusion, instantly fell like lightning on their rear-guard, routed it with great slaughter, and nearly accomplished the defeat of the whole army. Richard, with the gallant *Longue-espée*, hastened to the spot, and, after performing prodigies of

[1] A vessel of which the name still may be traced in the term *cock-boat*. Bailey's Dict.

[2] Schuyts, and many long-boats.

valour, rallied the fugitives, and enabled them to make head against the enemy. But the heat of the weather, and the clouds of dust, which a scorching wind drove full in their faces, was more destructive than the sword of the Saracens. The king, almost exhausted by fatigue, began to despair of success,—

On his knees he gan down fall;
"Help!" to Jesu he gan call,—
"For love of thy mother Mary!"
And, as I find in his story,
He saw come St. George the knight,
Upon a steed good and light,
In arms white as the flour,
With a cross of red colour.
All that he met in that stound,
Horse and man, went to ground,
And the wind gan wax lythe.[1]

A succour so miraculous and opportune instantly restored the strength and spirits of the Christians. Richard, Longue-épée, Sir Bertram, and Sir Robert Tourneham united their efforts: the Saracens were forced to give way, and ultimately fled in confusion, with the loss of their best troops, to the mountains of Nazareth; and the allied army, resuming their march, arrived in safety at Cayphas, where they celebrated a solemn thanksgiving in honour of their victory.

On the following day the Christians pursued their route to the city of Palestine, where they encamped to wait for their provisions. The fleet was most unfortunately delayed by various accidents; and Saladin took advantage of this interval to dismantle all the fortified places in the district, for the purpose of confining them to the coast, from the want of secure magazines. The romance enumerates the castles of Mirabel, Calaphyne, Seracye, Arsour, Jaffa, Touroun, Castle-Pilgrim, La Fere, St. George de Reyne, together with the walls of Bethlem and Jerusalem; the only places spared being Maiden-castle, and the castle of Aukesland. After these measures the sultan dispatched messengers to Richard, inviting him to decide the campaign by a decisive battle in the plain of Arsour; and the challenge was accepted without hesitation.

This important conflict is described more circumstantially

[1] Soft; weak. A. S.

than intelligibly. The Saracen forces, drawn from all parts of Saladin's extensive empire,

Of mo lands than any can tell,
Save He that made heaven and hell,

was seen to descend in three divisions from the mountains, and to overspread a vast extent of country. Each division contained sixty thousand men:

Her armour fared al as it brent!
Three thousand Turks came at the last
With bow-Turkeys, and arrow-blast[1].
A thousand tabours, and yet mo,
All at once they smiten tho.
All the earth donied[2] hem under!

Richard, in imitation of Saladin, formed his army also in three divisions; the first, consisting of the Knights Templars and Hospitalers, being led by Jaques Devayns, and John de Neles; the second by the duke of Burgundy and the earl of Boulogne; and the third by himself, with Doyley, Tourneham, and the earls of Salisbury and Leycester.

The battle commenced by a furious charge of the Knights Templars; but Jaques Devayns, attended only by his two sons, being carried too far by his impetuosity, was suddenly surrounded, and cut off from the possibility of retreat. The gallant veteran, being ably seconded by his sons, fought with so much desperation that the bodies were found after the battle surrounded by those of nine-and-twenty Saracens. Richard no sooner learnt the danger of the Christian chief than he hastened to his rescue, broke through the ranks of the enemy, and finding that he had arrived too late, was animated with such a desire of vengeance as seemed to double his usual prowess:

Of my tale be not a-wonder'd!
The French says he slew an hundred
(Whereof is made this English saw)
Or he rested him any thraw[3].
Him followed many an English knight,
That eagerly holp him for to fight;
And laid on, as they were wode,
Till valleys rannen all of blood.—
Many a man there slew other;
Many a Saracen lost there his brother,

[1] An engine for propelling arrows. [2] Dinned, sounded. [3] Time.

And many of the Heathen hounds
With her teeth gnew on the grounds.
By the blood upon the grass
Men might see where Richard was!—
Six thousand and seven score
At once he drove him before,
Up against an high cliff;
They fled as deer that had be drive;
And, for dread of King Richard,
Off the cliff they flew downward,
And all to-brast[1] horse and men,
That never none com to life of hem.

The rout now became general. Saladin himself fled from the field in despair, and was pursued by Richard; who, finding his horse unequal to the speed of his enemy, seized a bow from a foot soldier, and, directing an arrow against the sultan, wounded him in the shoulder. Sixty thousand Saracens fell in this battle, and their camp was pillaged by the Christians.

King Richard took the pavillouns,
Of sendal, and of cyclatoun[2].
They were shape of castels;
Of gold and silver the pencels.
Many were the fair gest
Thereon were written, and wild beast,
Tigers, dragons, lions, leopard:
All this wan the king Richard.
Bounden coffers, and great mails[3],
He had there withouten tales.
Of treasure they had so mickle wone[4],
They wist no where their good to done.[5]

After the battle the army rested at Arsour, and Richard's first care was to discover the body of the heroic Devsyns, which he immediately sent off under the care of Sir Gautier, chief of the Hospitalers, to be interred with all due honours at Jerusalem.

It was now determined to attempt, without further delay, the siege of Nineveh; but intelligence being received that the Saracens were assembling in great numbers in the plain of

[1] Burst, perished. [2] A rich Oriental stuff. [3] Boxes, packages, Fr.
[4] Plenty. [5] Knew not where to place their goods.

which, not, being pressed with sufficient division, retreated in good order to Ninev

The siege of that city was next undert tary engines being brought up to the w began to cast stones, and at the same time

> Arrowblast of vys,[1] with quarr
> With staff-slings that smite w
> With trepegettes[2] they slunge
> That wrought hem full mickle
> And blew wild fire in trumpes
> To mickle sorrow to hem withi

But these tardy operations were soon su posal from the garrison, to which King Ric consented; viz., that the fate of the place dencies should be decided by a combat bet and three Christian champions. Sir Arch bras, and Sir Calabre were respectively op Sir Thomas Tourneham, and Sir Fulk Do honour of contesting, for a short time, th three bravest knights in the world. The i however, proved fatal to the Mahometan c was surrendered; and the garrison and in been spectators of the battle, being convi religion was that which conferred militar in crowds to be baptized, and to follow t conquerors.

Richard, always indefatigable, harassed the besieged by constant night attacks, in which the flights of quarrells and arrows from his engines did great execution; and, during the day, employed his mangonels to beat down the outworks and approaches to the city. In short, the romancer assures us that the destruction of Saladin and his whole army would have been unavoidable, had not Philip been bribed by the vast treasures sent by the besieged to withdraw his forces, under pretence of wanting provisions, and thus to prevent the continuation of the blockade.

Saladin, being thus enabled to meet his enemy once more in the field, sent a messenger to offer battle; and at the same time a challenge to King Richard, to meet him in single combat in front of the two armies, for the purpose of deciding their respective pretensions, and of ascertaining whether "Jesus or Jupiter" was the more powerful divinity. The challenge was accompanied by the offer of a war-horse, far superior in strength and activity to Favel of Cyprus or Lyard of Prys, (the favourite horses of Richard,) which it was proposed that he should ride on the occasion.

It seems that a necromancer, a "noble clerk," had conjured two "strong fiends of the air" into the likeness of a mare and her colt; and that the younger devil had received instructions to kneel down and suck his dam, as often as she, by neighing, should give him a signal for the purpose. Such an attitude could not but prove very inconvenient to his rider, who would thus be nearly at the mercy of his antagonist; and it was hoped that Saladin, being mounted on the mare, would obtain an easy victory. Richard, ignorant of this conspiracy against his life and honour, readily accepted all the conditions; the horse was sent on the morning of the battle to the Christian camp; and the hopes of the fiend and of the Sultan seemed on the point of being realized.

But, during the preceding night, an angel had appeared to the Christian hero; had related the machinations of the Saracens; had given him full instructions for the management of his diabolical steed; and had presented to him a spear-head, which no armour, however enchanted, was able to resist. At the first dawn of day the hostile armies began to form in order of battle. That of the Saracens, occupying an extent of ten miles in front, threatened to surround the inferior forces of the Christians;

As snow ligges on the mountains,
Be-helied[1] were hills and plains,
With hauberk bright and helmes clear.
Of trumpes and of tabourer
To hear the noise it was wonder:
As though the earth above and under
Should fallen, so fared the sound!

Richard, however, perfectly indifferent about the numbers of the infidels, pointed them out to his troops as a multitude of victims whom heaven had destined to sacrifice; and, calling for his arms and horse, immediately prepared for battle.

The fiend horse being led forth, the king, in conformity to the angel's instructions, conjured him, in the name of the Trinity, to submit to his guidance in the battle; and the fiend having shaken his head in token of acquiescence, he ordered that the creature's ears should be closely stopped with wax, and that he should be caparisoned in the manner prescribed by the messenger of Heaven.

The reins of his bridle, the crupper, the girths, and the peytrel,[2] were of steel chain; the saddle-bows were of iron, and supported two hooks, by which was fixed a ponderous beam of wood, forty feet in length, lying across the horse's mane, and intended to bear down, at every evolution of the animal, whatever body of enemies might attempt to oppose his progress. From the lower part of the saddle-bows were suspended on one side the formidable battle-axe, always so fatal to the Saracens, and on the other a brazen club. The king, arrayed in splints of steel, which were again covered by a complete coat of mail; his helmet surmounted by the dove perching on a cross, the symbol of the Holy Ghost; his shield, emblazoned with three leopards, on his shoulder; and bearing in his hand the spear, on whose point was engraven the holy name of God, only waited till the terms of the battle between himself and Saladin should be publicly read, and assented to by both parties; and then, springing into the saddle, set spurs to his steed, and flew with the rapidity of lightning to the encounter.

Saladin, throwing his shield before him, rushed to the charge with equal impetuosity; but as he trusted principally to his mare, he was unwilling to encumber himself with a spear, and only bore in his hand a broad scymitar, with which

[1] Covered. Sax. [2] *Poitrail*, Fr. breast-plate.

he proposed to cut off the head of his prostrate enemy. The mare, indeed, exerted herself to the utmost: she shook with violence the numberless bells with which her bridle and housings were completely covered, and neighed with all her might; but the colt-fiend, whose ears were closely stopped, was insensible to a noise, which almost deafened both armies. Far from relaxing, he seemed to increase his speed, and met his unfortunate dam with a shock which she was not all prepared to resist.

Her girth and bridle instantly burst; she rolled on the plain: at the same time the spear of Richard passed through the serpent painted on the sultan's shield, penetrated his armour and part of the shoulder, and threw him, with his heels in the air, to a distance on the plain. Richard, without further troubling himself about the sultan or his mare, rode at full speed into the midst of the Saracen phalanx; overset with his beam twenty unbelievers on each side of his saddle; and, whirling his battle-axe, beheaded or clove to the chine every enemy within his reach. The earl of Salisbury, Doyley, Tourneham, and his other brave knights closely followed, and assisted in dissipating such of the enemy as ventured to resist; and Philip, with his Frenchmen, valiantly assailed the fugitives.

The rout soon became general:

> To tell the sooth in all things,
> In the Gest as we find,
> That mo than sixty thousind
> Of empty steeds abouten yode
> Up to the fetlocks in blood.

In the mean time, the citizens of Babylon, seeing from their walls the defeat of their countrymen, opened their gates to the victors; and Saladin, when recovered from his fall, seeing that all was lost, set spurs to his mare, and escaped into a thick wood, where Richard, encumbered by his beam, was unable to follow him.

Of the inhabitants of Babylon the greater number consented to be baptized: those who refused were, as usual, put to the sword; and the riches found in the town were distributed among the conquerors, who, after a fortnight spent in feasts and rejoicing, proceeded on their march towards Jerusalem, the reduction of which seemed to promise no considerable difficulty.

But the jealousy subsisting between the rival monarchs of France and England broke out at this time into an open and irreconcileable quarrel. Philip haughtily insisted that the city of Jerusalem, by whomsoever it might be taken, should be delivered to him as chief of the Christian army. Richard tauntingly replied that he must, in that case, undertake the siege with his own army. The dispute was continued in public, and in terms of mutual insult; and Philip ultimately put an end to it by withdrawing from the confederacy. The different Christian chiefs took part in the dissension; and Richard, at the head of a discontented and divided army, proceeded to Jaffa; which, considering it as the key of Palestine, he fortified with the utmost care, and provided with a numerous and select garrison.

From hence the army proceeded to Chaloyn, which also it was judged expedient to fortify. Here, for the purpose of hastening the works, Richard and the most zealous chiefs of the Christians took their share of the common labour, by carrying to the works the supply of stone and mortar required by the masons; while the adherents of Philip expressed their regret for his absence by a studied indifference to the progress of the work, and by a refusal of all co-operation. One of these, the duke of Austria, being one day met by King Richard and reproached for his sloth, tauntingly replied,—

" My father nas[1] mason ne carpenter,
And, though your walls should all to-shake,[2]
I shall never help hem to make!"

The English monarch, never very enduring, was now incensed to the utmost pitch of fury.

The duke with his foot he smot
Against the breast, God it wot,
That on a stone he him overthrew;
It was evil done, by Saint Mathew!

He at the same time ordered him to depart instantly, with his vassals, from the Christian camp, threatening to break his standard and throw it into the river; and while the duke retired, muttering projects of vengeance which he afterwards too successfully executed, Richard continued to follow him with imprecations, exclaiming—

——— with voice full steep,
" Home! shrew! coward! and sleep!

[1] Was not. [2] Shake in pieces.

Come no more, in no wise,
Never eft in God's service!"

The duke of Burgundy, the earl of Boulogne, and all the "folk of France," having withdrawn themselves with the duke of Austria, the Christian army was much reduced in numbers: but this diminution was in some measure compensated by greater zeal and unanimity; and Richard was still able to persevere with success in his plan of offensive operations. He surprised, at Castle Albary, a considerable magazine belonging to the Saracens. He then assaulted Castle Daroun; the garrison of which, after an obstinate defence, set fire to their stores and retreated into the citadel. Richard, not wishing to preserve the place, completed the conflagration; so that the enemy, being surrounded by flames, were compelled to surrender at discretion.

His next expedition was against Gatrys; his entry into which was marked by a very singular adventure. The governor, it seems, had been in his youth distinguished for his military prowess, but was now incapacitated by age and infirmity from conducting the defence of the place against such an adversary as was preparing to attack him. He therefore had recourse to the following stratagem, founded on a perfect knowledge of Richard's character:—He ordered the citizens to erect, in the most conspicuous part of the town, a colossal statue of marble; to put a crown on its head; to salute it with all the honours usually paid to himself; and, if questioned concerning their governor, to declare that they had no other than Mahoun, Apolyn, and the statue. At the same time he directed that the gates of the town should be opened at the first summons of the Christians.

The event was such as he had, probably, foreseen. Richard, astonished at the immediate surrender of a place where he had expected a long resistance, immediately inquired after the governor; and, finding that it was a statue, felt an irresistible propensity to fight with that statue.

"O Saracens!" said Richard, "without fail,
Of your lord I have mervail!
If I may, thorough my Lord so good,
That bought us all upon the rood,
With a shaft break his neck asunder,
And ye may see that great wonder,

Will ye leve all upon my Lord?"
"Yea!" they saiden at one word.

He then took his strongest spear, which, as a further precaution, was strengthened with plates of iron; leaped on Favel of Cyprus; took his distance; charged his marble antagonist at full speed; struck him in the midst of the face, and beat off his head, which crushed two Saracens by its fall. The citizens were all baptized; the real governor was produced, and rewarded for the joke by the restoration of his office.

The Christians now returned to Chaloyn, from whence they marched against Castle Leffunyde, the garrison of which abandoned it on their approach, and then won by assault the post of Gybelin, formerly occupied by the Templars and Hospitalers, and distinguished by the birth of St. Anne. Here Richard was met by messengers from England, who informed him that his brother John, having expelled the chancellor from the government, was preparing to seize the crown, but he disbelieved the intelligence, and continued his progress to Bethany, where, as usual, he exterminated a number of unbelievers. A confirmation of the former news having met him at this place, he began to think seriously of returning to his dominions: being informed, however, by a Saracen captive, that a convoy of two thousand camels laden with treasure, and escorted by a large body of troops, were passing to Saladin's camp, he put himself at the head of a few chosen knights, and overtook the enemy before day-break; but, disdaining to take advantage of a surprise, waited for them in battle array, attacked and dispersed the escort, and carried off the whole convoy to Bethany.

Here he was met by the bishop of Chester, and the abbot of St. Albans, who had been deputed by the barons to state to him the rebellion of his brother, and the irruption of Philip into Normandy. Richard therefore was compelled to prepare for his departure; but, being anxious for the future success of the Christians, left at Jaffa a chosen garrison of fifteen thousand men, commanded by officers on whom he could safely rely, together with provisions sufficient to secure them against all danger from a blockade; after which he repaired to Acre, where he meant to station the remainder of his army until his return, when he hoped to achieve the original object of the enterprise.

The news of his intended departure was carried to Saladin at a moment when that monarch, incensed at the loss of his treasure, had collected an almost innumerable army for the purpose of revenging his loss and crushing the enemy at one blow. He might have insured the success of his operations by waiting for the absence of his formidable antagonist: but Jaffa, already well fortified, and garrisoned by a little army, might in a short time be rendered almost impregnable; whereas, if it were now recovered, all the future efforts of the Christians to obtain possession of Palestine would be rendered nugatory.

The author of the romance has exerted all his powers in giving importance to this great and final conflict. He has ushered in his description by a separate prologue, in which he introduces all the heroes of real and fabulous history, for the sole purpose of asserting the superiority of his favourite Richard. The Saracens, he says, occupied a space of twenty miles in length by five in depth; the whole horizon gleamed with the blaze of their weapons, and it appeared

> As it had fro heaven light
> Among the swords that were so bright.

The Christians in Jaffa, though assailed by such a countless multitude, defended themselves with vigour and effect; they made a dreadful carnage among the besiegers; but "it fared," says the romance, "as they out of the ground were *waxen*," and the traces of slaughter were instantly effaced by the influx of fresh combatants. The garrison, covered with the blood of their enemies, and exhausted by fatigue, were at length compelled to retire into the citadel, from whence, under cover of the night, they dispatched messengers to Richard with an account of their situation. The king, conceiving the report of the messengers to be much exaggerated, contented himself with sending a strong detachment to their relief under the command of his nephew, Henry of Champagne; but the duke had no sooner beheld the numbers of the Saracens' army, than he returned with precipitation,

> And said, "he ne saw never, ne heard
> In all this wide middel-erd,[1]
> Halfin-deal[2] the people of men,
> That Saladin has, by down and den.

[1] Earth. Sax. [2] Half.

" No tongue," he said, " may hem tell!
I ween they comen out of hell!"
Then answered King Richard,
" Fy! a debles![1] vile coward!
Shall I never, by God above,
Trusten unto French-man's love?"

After making the duke responsible for all the inconveniences that might arise in consequence of the delay, Richard hastily ordered out his galleys; embarked a chosen body of troops with all possible expedition, steered to Jaffa, and after a short and prosperous navigation cast anchor under the walls of the citadel.

It was before the high mid-night,
(The moon and the stars shone bright)
King Richard into Jaffé was come,
With his galleys, all and some.[2]
They looked up to the castel;
They heard no pipe, no flagel![3]
They drew hem nigh to the land,
If they mighten understand,
And they ne could nought espie,
Ne by no voice of minstralcie
That quick man in the castle were:
King Richard then becom full of care.
" Alas," he said, " that I was born!
My good barons ben forlorn!
Slain is Robert of Leycester,
That was mine own courteous maister!
Ilk limb of him was worth a knight!
And Robert Tourneham, that was so wight,
And Sir Bertram, and Sir Pipard,
In battle that were wise and hard,
And also mine other barons,
The best in all Christendom,
They ben slain and forlore,
How may I longer live therefore?
Had I been in time comen hither,
I might have saved altogether.
Till I be wreken of Saladine,
Certes, my joy shall I tyne!"[4]

[1] *Au diable!* Fr. [2] *All and some,* every one. [3] Flagelet. [4] Lose.

Thus wailed King Richard aye,
Till it were spring of the day.
A wait[1] there come, in a kernel,[2]
And piped a nott[3] in a flagel.
He ne piped but one sythe,[4]
He made many an heart blithe!
He looked down and saw the galley
Of King Richard, and his navey:
Ships and galleys well he knew.
Then a merrier note he blew,
And piped "Seigneurs, or sus! or sus.
King Richard is comen to us!"

The joyful tidings were soon spread through the citadel; the besieged greeted the return of their sovereign with shouts of welcome, which were answered from the fleet; and Richard, leaping on shore, followed by the crews of the nearest vessels, instantly attacked the enemy, who were utterly unprepared for such an assault.

"We have," he said, "life but one
Sell we it, both flesh and bone,
For to claim our heritage!"

The avenues of the town being all unguarded, the Saracens were attacked on every side and slaughtered without opposition. They fled in confusion through the gates; and, when these were choked by the crowd of fugitives, precipitated themselves in numbers from the walls, exclaiming—

"The English devil yeomen is!
Giff he us meet, we shall die;
Flee we fast out of his way!"

Richard, as soon as he could collect and marshal his troops, and take the necessary measures for the security of the town, sallied forth in pursuit of the enemy, whom he overtook before they could recover from their confusion, and again routed with dreadful slaughter; the Christians, says the romance, slaying the enemy

——— all so swythe
As grass falleth fro the scythe.

The pursuit had now lasted till the approach of night; and Richard, weary with slaughter, ordered his tents to be pitched,

[1] Musician. [2] Battlement. [3] Note. [4] Time.

intending in the morning to attack the main army of Saladin; which, being weakened by the loss of thirty thousand men, would, he hoped, be easily dispersed. He was therefore not a little surprised when, being at supper with his barons, he was saluted by two ambassadors from Saladin, who, alighting from their mules, and marching hand in hand into his tent, gravely advised him to shorten his meal, and to retreat, while it was yet time, within the walls of Jaffa. They assured him that their king was at hand with an army whose weight the earth was scarcely able to support; that, after contemplating its numbers from the walls of his citadel, he might calmly decide whether it was more advisable to abide a siege, in the hope of future succour, or to desist at once from his vain pretensions to a dominion which he was unable to acquire, and return, as he would still be permitted to do, into his own territories.

In anger Richard took up a loaf,
And in his hands it all to-rofe;[1]
And said to that Sarazyn,
"God give thee well evil pine![2]
And Saladine your lord,
The devil him hang with a cord!"

and after again imprecating on all the Saracens, generally and individually, the "curse of sweet Jesus," declared himself ready to encounter, singly, any numbers that Saladin might be able to bring into the field. The ambassadors, unable to obtain a more courteous answer, returned to Saladin, and Richard retired to sleep.

In the morning he was awakened by an angel, who told him to rise and marshal his army without loss of time; to exert every effort for the purpose of cutting his way back to Jaffa; and, at the conclusion of the battle, to make a truce with Saladin and return to England, where his presence was indispensably necessary.

Richard, starting from his bed, instantly called for his arms, and, leaping on his favourite horse, Favel of Cyprus, rode through the ranks of his little army, issuing the necessary orders to his officers, and encouraging his troops by the promise of divine assistance, during a retreat which, without such assistance, would have been apparently quite impracticable. The whole plain between the Christians and the

[1] Broke to pieces. [2] Punishment.

city, an extent of many miles, was occupied and completely covered by the enemy, whose numbers enabled them to employ one army in the assault of the citadel, while another, still more formidable, opposed the march of Richard. His little corps, surrounded and harassed on all sides, were perfectly aware of their peril; but they were veterans, highly disciplined, inured to the climate, confident in themselves and in their leader, and animated at once by despair and enthusiasm: while the Saracens, chiefly composed of new levies, would have been easily defeated, had not the fugitives been constantly driven back on the swords of the Christians, by the multitudes rushing on to share in a battle of which they had never felt the danger. Richard, as usual, was always in the thickest part of the press (crowd):

> They gunnen on him as thick to fleen,
> As out of the hive doth the been;
> And, with his ax, down he swepe
> Of the Saracens, as bear doth sheep.

His efforts being constant and unrelaxed, he must have been ultimately crushed and stifled by the crowds of assailants; but perceiving a marsh and lake on one side of his line of march, he suddenly collected a part of his cavalry, and, making a dreadful charge in that direction, drove a column of the enemy before him into the water, and thus procured a temporary respite.

The number of the slain and drowned amounted at this time, says the romance, to at least sixty thousand; and yet the Saracen army appeared unimpaired; and the Christians were summoned to new exertions by the danger of Henry of Champagne, who was unhorsed, and on the point of being made prisoner. This unfortunate accident occasioned a long and severe contest, which terminated to the advantage of the Christians, who rescued the duke; but Richard, in his zeal to revenge his nephew, forgot, for a time, the instructions of the angel, and the necessity of directing his whole force against the army which still excluded him from the gates of Jaffa, and which by this time had nearly succeeded in assaulting the citadel.

He was now informed by a messenger who had with difficulty made his way through the enemy, that the garrison, exhausted by fatigue, were nearly incapable of further resistance, and that the gates were in flames; adding,

William Arsour, and Sir Ge
Bertram Braundys, thy good
They are slain and many mo

Richard, at this mournful intelligenc
dence, and, checking the pursuit, insta
force against the besieging army. Bu
that the capture of the town would
assailed him with unceasing fury, and
fortune to slay under him his favourite
Favel of Cyprus. The triumph of the
to be secure; and the only contest amo
the honour of killing or taking prisoner
de Lion. Two Saracen knights, whom
sons of Saladin, directed their spears a
ordering him to surrender; but he ans
the head of the first who came within hi
wounded in the arm by the second with
soon brought him also to the ground.
and some hundreds of private men, succ
axe of Richard; who, though on foot, s
nothing of his superiority, and at last
passage through the enemy, and arrive
citadel.

The fate of the day was now decided
famous Lyard, was brought to Richar
sallying out, attended by the flower of t

sultan, with proposals for a truce during three years, on the terms suggested by the angel; to which however he added, on his own part, the offer of deciding their pretensions by a duel, in which he, singly, should be opposed to five and twenty knights selected from the armies of Saladin. The sultan consented to the truce without insisting on the duel, and the articles were ratified on the following day.

Tho afterward, all the three year,
Christian men, both far and near,
Yeden the way to Jerusalem,
To the sepulchre, and to Bethlem,
To Olivet, and to Nazarel,
And to Imaus castel,
And to all other pilgrimage,
Withouten harm or damage.
King Richard, doughty of hand,
Turned homeward to England.
King Richard reigned here
No more but ten year.
Sithen, he was shot, alas!
In castel Gaillard there he was.
Thus ended Richard our king:
God give us all good ending!
And his soul rest and roo,[1]
And our souls, when we come thereto!
Amen. Explicit.

[1] *Ruhe*, repose, German.

Arthur and his knights are professe
or chronicle translated by Geoffrey o
manner the trouvæurs and minstrels
fabulous story of Charlemagne and
as the Italians who have imitated a
ventions, uniformly appeal to the l
bishop Turpin,[1] the contemporary an
This absurd chronicle was compose
title "Joannis Turpini historia de vi
landi," and it may be presumed that
tory were formerly very numerous, th
principally derived its popularity fro
paraphrases and imitations, some of
almost equal antiquity with the origi
by the subsequent prose translators.

The earliest of these, according to F
a certain *Jehans*, who, at the instance
Boulogne and de Daumartin (then de
Philippe Auguste), turned into Frenc
Turpin which he found in the archives
of this work is still preserved in MS. i

The next translation was made by C
to Francis I, and was printed at Paris

There is a Latin paraphrase of the
many of which rhyme to each other,
preserved in Bibl. Reg. 13 A. xxiii

who lived in the time of Philippe Auguste, contains, as he tells us, the romance of Renaud de Montauban, and not that of Roland. Perhaps it may be a conversion into prose of the metrical romance on the same subject, written, as Fauchet informs us, by Huon de Villeneuve, about the commencement of the fourteenth century.

Be this as it may, there can be no doubt that numberless fables concerning Charlemagne were grafted on the narrative of the supposed Turpin; and, indeed, his translator Gaguin appears to be almost ashamed of the imperfect narrative contained in his original, and is very solicitous to excuse himself for suppressing many particulars concerning his hero, which, though very necessary to be known, the archbishop had not thought fit to notice. Thus, after mentioning (cap. 26) Olivier, Gondebault roy de Frigie, Ogier roy de Dannemarc, Arestaigne roy de Bretaigne, Guarin duc de Lorraine, and others, he refers us to "leurs histoires plus au long descriptes, lesquelles je laisse pour le present à ceux qui lisent les romans, livres, et autres escriptures:" and in his concluding chapter he gives us a sketch of some important events, which, if he had thought fit, he could have communicated more at large. We might have been told, it seems, "comme Galafre, amiral de la ville de Tolede, le para et adorna de l'habit militaire, du temps qu'il estoit en son enfance mis en exil; et le tint en son palais; et comment aussi le dict Charlemagne, pour l'amour du dessus dict Galafre, tua puis après et mist à mort par bataille le grant Bracinant, qui estoit un roy très fier et tres orgueilleux des mescréans et infidelles, d'iceluy Galafre mortels ennemis. Vous povez avoir *oui reciter* cette bataille merveilleuse, ou, vous l'avez *veu par escript* en aulcuns autres livres, et pourtant je m'en tayse. Je laisserai semblablement la maniere comment le noble Charlemagne, conquesta et acquist terres diverses, villes et cités, par sa vaillantise et prouesse; et lès assubjectist au nom de la Trinité, Pere, Fils, et saint Esprit. Et ainsi comment il institua par le monde maintes abbayes, &c. &c. Et comment il fut faict empereur de Rome, ealu (comme je crois) divinement et par la grace de Dieu; et alla en la sainteterre voir et visiter le saint sepulchre de N. S. en moulte grande dévotion de cueur et révérence; et comment il apporta avec lui le sainct bois precieulx de la croix de Jesus Christ, où il pendit pour notre redemption, par lesquelles choses il enrichist maintes eglises. Toutes ces

choses ai laissées *par briefveté*, et aussi que vous les avez peu voir ailleurs et en plusieurs livres, &c."

That such absurdities as these should be accepted in lieu of authentic history in a credulous age, and where better materials could not be had, would excite no astonishment; but it is very surprising that for a length of time they should have usurped the place of the numerous historical documents which record the glory of a Charlemagne, whose character, when left to the sober voice of truth, is far more amiable and respectable than that of his ideal and romantic substitute. In fact, there is good reason to believe that the name of Charlemagne was first introduced by mistake into a series of fictions, of which the real hero was of a still earlier date; and it is the opinion of Leyden, an author of much research and information, that the origin of these fictions is to be sought in Britany. I shall give his sentiments in his own words:

"That class of romances which relates to Charlemagne and his twelve peers, ought probably to be referred to the same source; since they ascribe to that French monarch the feats which were performed by an Armorican chief. The grand source from which the fabulous history of Charlemagne is thought to be derived, is the supposititious history ascribed to his contemporary Turpin, which, in 1122, was declared to be genuine by papal authority. The history of this work is extremely obscure; but, as it contains an account of the pilgrimage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem, its composition must have been posterior to the Crusades. The abbé Velley has shown that the principal events which figure in the romantic history of that monarch have no relation to him whatever, though they are historically true of the Armorican chieftain, Charles Martel. It was this hero, whose father was named Pepin, and who had four sons, who performed various exploits in the forest of Ardenne against the four sons of Aymon; who warred against the Saxons; who conquered the Saracens at Poictiers; it was he who instituted an order of knighthood, who deposed the duke of Aquitaine, and who conferred the donation of the sacred territory on the see of Rome. Is it not therefore more probable that the history and exploits of this hero should be celebrated by the minstrels of his native country, than that they should be, for the first time, narrated by a dull prosing monk some centuries after his death? Is it not more probable, that when the fame of Charles Martel

had been eclipsed by the renown of Charlemagne, the monkish abridger of the songs of the minstrels should transfer the deeds of the one to the other by an error of stupidity, than that he should have deliberately falsified history when he had no purpose to serve? The ingenious author to whom I have already referred seems to have pointed out the source of this error.[1] In the Armoric language *meur* signifies great, *mayne;* and *marra* a mattock, *martel;* so that, instead of Charlemagne and Charles Martel, we have Charlemeur and Charlemarra, names which, from the similarity of sound, might easily be confounded. A similar blunder has been committed by the Norman trouveur, who transferred the characteristic epithet of Caradoc, from the Welsh or Armorican, to the Romance language."[2]

Leyden afterwards mentions, in confirmation of his conjecture, the allusion in Turpin's history to a song or poem concerning Oell or Howel, the Breton earl, "de hoc canitur in cantilena usque ad hodiernum diem;" and it may not perhaps be irrelevant to add that Roland, the principal actor in these romances, is taken from the immediate vicinity of Bretagne. "The domain of these British princes," says D'Anville (Etats de l'Europe, p. 77), "was confined, to speak generally, to what is properly called Lower Britany, and to the territory formerly occupied by the Veneti and by the Osismii. Upper Britany, comprehending the territories of the antient Redones and Namnetes, was a frontier country opposed to the lands of the Bretons; and the famous Roland, nephew of Charlemagne and count of Angers, commanded there." Possibly too the terrible Ferragus may be a giant of Celtic origin: for Selden has told us,[3] that the war-song in use amongst the Irish kerns was called *Pharroh;* and the vulgar Irish, as Mr. Walker informs us, suppose the subject of this song to have been Forroch or *Ferragh*, a terrible giant, of whom they tell many a marvellous tale.[4] By the way, it is to be lamented that the Irish antiquaries, many of whom seem to be well versed in their early language, should neglect to give us a series of their ancient popular tales, with a simple and literal English translation.

[1] Enquirer, No. xix. ap. Monthly Mag. Feb. 1800.
[2] Prelim. Dissert. to the Complaynt of Scotland, p. 263.
[3] Drayton's Polyolbion, Song 6.
[4] Historical Memoirs of Irish Bards, &c. London, 1786.

able for poetical merit, is so far curious that it faithful compendium, as far as it goes, of the

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THE poem begins by a singular error however, was not perhaps very likely t whom it was addressed.

An hundred winters it was,
Sithen God died upon the t
That Charles the king
Had all France in his hand
Denmark and England,
Withouten any lesing;
Lorraine and Lombardy,
Gascogne, Bayonne, and Pi
Was till his bidding;
And emperor he was of Ro
And lord of all Christendo
Then was he a high lordi

Having disposed of so many kingdom author had few to spare for the other accordingly, he mentions only two; emperor of Constantinople, and Ibrahim Ibrahim was a strenuous Pagan, who tians without mercy, and banished the The poor patriarch made his complai on his part made his complaint to Hea

The Greek emperor, as may be supposed, received his noble visitor with every possible demonstration of respect, and offered him in profusion the presents usual on such occasions, consisting of gold and silver, rich cloths, and furs of tame and "savage beasts:" but the pious Charles refused to accept any of these valuable presents, and only requested from his generous entertainer the gift of a few relics, on which he set a much higher value. Constantius complied, and conducted his guest to the sanctuary where these treasures were deposited; on opening which, their senses were gratified by a smell of such uncommon sweetness and efficacy, that three hundred sick, who were then at their devotions near the spot, were instantly restored to health.

Then brought they forth the holy crown,
And the arm of Saint Simoun,
  Before hem alle there:
And a part of the holy cross,
That in a chrystal was done in clos,[1]
  And Goddis clothing:
Our levedy's[2] smock that she had on,
And the yerd[3] of Aaron,
  Forth they gan bring;
And the spear, long and smert,[4]
That Longys put to Goddis heart,
  He gave Charles the king;
And a nail, long and great,
That was y-drive thorough God's feet,
  Withouten any lesing.

Charles, having accepted these valuable presents with becoming gratitude, prayed to Jesus that the authenticity of the relics might be manifested by some unequivocal testimony: and at the instant there descended from heaven a beam of light so brilliant, that the place where they stood was judged by all present to be extremely like to Paradise. Overjoyed at this testimony, he took leave of the good Constantius, returned to his own dominions, and went to meditate on his good fortune at Aix in Gascony.

Here he seems to have totally forgotten the wickedness of Ibrahim, the sufferings of the exiled patriarch, and the request of Constantius: but fortunately he was much addicted to star-gazing; and having observed a flight of stars or meteors,

[1] Inclosed. [2] Lady's. [3] Rod or wand. [4] Piercing, sharp.

would have occasion for a large army, whi
fore do well to assemble. The apostle add
that his body was buried in Galicia; th
unwillingly in the hands of the infidels; th
to be properly grateful to those who sho
contamination; and that he would promise
tyrdom to such of his friends as should fall
As the saint was well aware of the sho
memory, he had the precaution to repeat
times; in consequence of which the pious
his enterprise in good earnest, and enter
army well calculated by its numbers to inst
the country.

The opening of the campaign was not
lay six months before the city of Pampelu
able to reduce it; after which he very lucki
prayers; and these being seconded by St.
walls of the city were miraculously throw
army entered without further opposition
Saracens, converted by this palpable inter
dence, consented to receive baptism: those
their infidelity were, after due exhortation
ducted to the gallows. From this time the
magne was almost uninterrupted, and six
successively reduced to his obedience. All
has taken the pains to enumerate, for the in
rity; but as his transcriber has taken

For their deadly sin:
Desert they weren after tnan,
That never, sith then, no Christian man
No durst come therin.
For Charles cursed so Lucern,
All so tite[1] the town gan burn,
And shall don evermo!
And, of the smut of that town,
Many taketh therof poisoun,
And dyeth in mickle wo.
And there the other three cities stood,
Beth waters red of helle flood,
And fishes therin all blo;[2]
And who that will not leve[3] me,
In Spain men may the sooth see,
Who that will thither go.

We are now told of a miracle, which, excepting that miracles are always good things, might just as well have been reserved for any other occasion. Charles, it seems, planted some vines in the month of March, and on the very next day they were covered with grapes, both black and red, and in such abundance that it was difficult to supply baskets sufficient to contain them.

It was an object of considerable anxiety, both to Charles and Turpin, to destroy all the mawmettes, or idols, which they could find, not only because they were much revered by the Saracens, but because their materials were in general valuable, and capable of being much better employed in endowing churches and monasteries. In this therefore, "so sayeth *the Latin*," they proceeded with great perseverance.

And an image of great pousté[4]
Stood on a roche by the sea,
In the Gilden Londe;
His name was Salanicodas;
As a man y-shapen he was,
And held a glaive in hond.
Mahoun maked him with gin,
And did many fiends therin,
As ich understond,
For to sustain the image;
And set him on high stage,

[1] Immediately. [2] Livid. [3] Believe. [4] Power.

The image should fall as
Charles did the image fall,
And wan in Spain the cities
And with tresor that he was
Both tower and town;
Many a church he let areer,
That was of great renown

Our author, whose disposition to p
meration of churches is concerned,
Turpin himself, is fortunately diverted
the recital of which he likes still bette
Charlemagne was lying at Bayonne,
army called Romain died, and directed
horse and other goods, and to distri
poor. The executor appropriated the
in consequence of which the decease
had thus been intercepted, was kept s
and on his release appeared in a dr
former companion, to whom he denou
ment of his iniquity. The terrified exe
ful vision in the public hall; and whil
small company of demons, borne on
the room, carried him into the air, tra
dashed him to pieces against a rock
body was found at the next march of

The reader will perhaps be of op
Ferragus, the two heroes of this

ıg or end of his story, could not be displaced in the
He has therefore inserted it here.
es was considerably above the middle stature, being,
Latin us said," twenty feet in height, of proportion-
ıgth, and of a stern aspect. His hair was black; his
ance ruddy. At four festivals in the year, that is to
Easter, at Whitsuntide, on St. James's day, and at
as, he wore, from motives of piety, " the holy crown
;" and on these occasions he dined in public, sur-
by his knights, having a drawn sword carried before
ıt night his couch was guarded by a company of a
knights, each bearing in one hand a lighted torch,
he other a naked falchion. It was during one of these
at Pampelune, where he displayed his usual magni-
that he received a challenge from Ferragus, a general
ıinst him by the soudan of Babylon, to meet him in

And on a day came tiding
Unto Charles the king,
All of a doughty knight,
Was comen to Vasers;[1]
Stout he was, and fierce,
Ferragus he hight.
Of Babyloun the soudan
Thither him send gan,
With King Charles to fight;
So hard he was to-fond,[2]
That no dint of brond
No grieved him, I plight.
He had twenty men's strength;
And forty feet of length
Thilke paynim had;
And four feet in the face
Y-meten[3] on the place,
And fifteen in brede.[4]
His nose was a foot and more;
His brow, as bristles wore;
(He that it saw it said)
He looked lothliche,[5]
And was swart[6] as pitch;
Of him men might adrede!

ıame given by Gaguin, viz. Avager, is equally unintelligible.
d or proved. [3] Measured. [4] Breadth. [5] Loathly. [6] Black.

Charles repaired to Vasers, for the purpose of reconnoitring his monstrous enemy; but after examining him limb by limb with the minutest attention, was so little tempted by the survey, that he declined the challenge; but suffered Ogier le Danois, whose curiosity to try the strength of such an uncouth adversary was keener than his own, to encounter the giant in the presence of both armies. Ogier armed himself with great care, mounted his best horse, chose a lance of uncommon strength, and rushed upon his enemy with the rapidity of lightning; but Ferragus, receiving the point of the spear on his shield with an air of perfect indifference, seized the knight with his right hand, lifted him from his horse, and, trussing him under his arm in such a manner that the captive could make no effort to escape, bore him off in perfect silence to the castle of Vasers. The novelty of this spectacle astonished but did not intimidate the warriors of Charlemagne. On the following morning, the gallant Reynald de Aubépine[1] presented himself to the giant, but was as unsuccessful as Ogier; and Ferragus, not more disturbed by the struggles of the dauntless knight, whom he held under his arm, than a hawk by the fluttering of the prey in its talons, tauntingly exclaimed to Charlemagne,

"Sir! thou wonnest Spain!
Hadst thou none better tho?
So Mahoun me give rest,
Against ten, and swiche[2] the best,
To fight ich would go!"

Charles, on the next day, dispatched Sir Constantine of Rome, together with Howel, earl of Nantes, on the same errand: he then sent ten knights at once, but all shared the same fate; and he foresaw that his army was on the point of being taken from him piece-meal, by the villainous giant, when the formidable Roland demanded the combat, and, in spite of the king's entreaties, persisted in his resolution of attacking the unbelieving monster.

Ferragus, well aware from the appearance of Roland, that he had now to deal with no common adversary, put forth his whole strength, and actually succeeded in pulling from the saddle, and in putting before him on his own horse's neck, the greatest and most redoubtable of all Christian champions: but Roland, after a short mental prayer to Jesus, exerted him-

[1] More generally called Renaud de Montauban; the Rinaldo of the Italians. [2] Such.

self so effectually, that with a sudden jerk he unhorsed the giant in his turn, and fell with him to the ground. They now remounted as quickly as possible; and Roland drawing his sword, the terrible *Durindale*, aimed a blow at Ferragus, which, though it missed the rider, cut off the head of the horse, and brought them both to the ground. Ferragus revenged himself by killing Roland's horse, whom he felled to the earth by a blow of his fist. The champions were now both on foot, and commenced a combat which lasted from the morning till night; and which, though highly interesting to the very numerous spectators, was perfectly harmless with respect to both the actors, because Roland prudently avoided the grasp of his adversary, and, parrying every blow, applied the edge of Durindale to all parts of the giant's impenetrable hide, but without being able to make the least impression. Ferragus, however, contrived to tire himself so effectually by his useless exertions, that he was the first to propose a truce till the next day; when Roland resolved to try the effect of a new weapon, having sufficiently asertained that his sword, though so well tempered as to cut the hardest marble, could not even scratch the skin of this huge Saracen.

On the following morning the battle was renewed. Roland now brought with him a knotty oaken club; and as his superior address still enabled him to avoid his enemy's weapon, he had nothing to do but to beat the giant, at his leisure, with the club, from morning till noon. Ferragus felt the weight of the blows, and became more exasperated, and rather more awkward than before: but the cudgel was as incapable of bruising as the sword had been of cutting him. At noon therefore the champions, by common consent, dropped their weapons, and began to throw stones at each other; and this curious battle was kept up till Ferragus became immoderately sleepy, and requested permission to take a short nap. Roland, whose courtesy was equal to his valour, readily consented; and the giant, almost instantly falling asleep, began to snore so unreasonably loud, that his adversary heard him at first with astonishment, and at last with compassion, conceiving that he must be in very great pain, and that neither man nor monster could be naturally inclined to slumbers so very noisy and inharmonious. He therefore, after surveying all the fragments of rock which they had lately thrown at each other, at length pitched upon one which appeared sufficiently

kindly provided him with a pillow;
ever consider as his friend the person
good office; upon which the knight s
it, partly indeed in charity to his ow
almost deafened: "but," continued l
very fond of me, pray tell me whethe
nerable?" Ferragus answered that h
the navel; and then inquired in his
rentage, and education of his new acq

It was not to be expected that t
reply to all these particulars, without r
and this naturally led him to lament
whom he was then addressing was ulti
the devil. Ferragus, on his part, a
usually imputed to the whole race of
to convince his opponent of his talen
desired Roland to give him a lesson
the other readily undertook. The c
consent, postponed; and the Christia
whether the monster's head was more
than to the knots of his club, or to
Durindale.

Roland began by stating very conci
of his creed; to all of which Ferragu
his objections. He began by the Trini

Ferragus said tho,
" It no might never be

prehensible; and that God, finding it necessary to send us a Redeemer, might have either caused him to appear amongst us immediately, or through the intervention of that birth which he had established for the rest of his creatures: but that, either in deviating from or conforming to his own general laws, his conduct on this occasion must have appeared to us equally mysterious. Ferragus, not being prepared to canvass this argument, consented, for the present, to admit it; but declared that the death of God upon a cross was quite impossible; and that his resurrection was equally incredible:

" For that I ne wist never no man
That arose after than
When that he dead was."

Roland, unwilling to lose his proselyte by want of apparent deference to his experience or understanding, appeared to consider this objection as of great weight, and answered that in fact the godhead did not die while the animation of the body was suspended, but was then employed in the work of our redemption, and that hence arose our hopes of a blessed immortality. Ferragus appeared so far satisfied; and expressed no further doubts, excepting as to Christ's return to heaven, the height and distance of which appeared perfectly unmeasurable. Roland replied, that God could return thither with as much ease as he had descended from thence; and that with respect to the distance of heaven, it was not less wonderful that the sun, after having manifestly set in the west, should in the course of the night measure back its whole progress, and rise in the opposite point of the firmament.

Roland had probably entertained great hopes from the ingenuity of this last illustration, and was therefore not a little disappointed when the perverse giant made him the following speech:

Quath Ferragus, " Now ich wot
Your Christian law every grot;
Now we will fight
Whether law better be,
Soon we shall y-see,
Long ere it be night."

However, as it was clear that the giant was tired of theology, and very unlikely to be converted by persuasion, it became necessary to try once more what could be accomplished by force. Both combatants were perfectly refreshed, both were

incensed by their late disputation, and their first strokes were dreadful. That of Roland nearly crushed his antagonist, who in his turn cut in two, with a single blow of his sword, the massive oaken club which had been chosen as the most formidable weapon in all Charlemagne's armoury. Ferragus now began to exult at the prospect of an easy victory; but Roland, devoutly falling on his knees, preferred a prayer to heaven, and requested the divine interference in a combat which he had undertaken solely for the purpose of vindicating his insulted religion. An angel immediately descended,

And said, "Heard is thy boon;
Arise, Roland, and fight,
And shed the shrew's[1] blood,
For he nas never good
By lond nor by sea;
Though all the preachers alive
To Christendom would him shrive,[2]
Good nold he never be!"

The Christian champion now felt himself possessed of a degree of strength which no human power could resist. Though only armed with a fragment of his club, he struck off the left arm of the giant, and by a second blow felled him to the ground; after which, easily disarming him, he pierced him with his own sword through the navel, the only vulnerable part of his person. The expiring Ferragus loudly called on his god Mahomet; but

Roland lough[3] for that cry,
And said, "Mahoun! sikerly,
No may thee help nought,
No Jupiter, no Apolin,
No is worth the brust of a swin,[4]
In heart no in thought."
His ventail he gan unlace,
And smote off his heved in that place,
And to Charles it brought:
Tho thanked he God in heaven,
And Mary, with mild steven,[5]
That so had y-wrought.
And all the folk of the land,
For honour of Roland,

[1] man. [2] Confess. [3] Laughed. [4] Bristle of a sow. [5] Voice.

Thanked God, old and young;
And yede a processioun,
With cross and with gonfanoun,[1]
And salme, and merry song.
Both widow and wife in place,
Thus thonked Godis grace,
All that spake with tongue;
To Otuel al so yern,
That was a Sarrazin stern,
Full soon this word sprung.

These concluding words seem to connect this romance with the following.

SIR OTUEL.

The fable of this romance, though not contained in the original Chronicle of Turpin, appears to have been very soon engrafted on and connected with it. I do not know that it was ever printed; but it is preserved in MS., though in an imperfect state, in the Auchinleck volume. The fragment contains 1738 lines, and is written in couplets with considerable spirit and animation. A second MS., in six-lined stanzas, is in the possession of W. Fillingham, Esq. The style of this is much more languid and feeble, resembling pretty nearly the diction of the romance which we have just examined. It has, however, the merit of completing the story, and of furnishing a paraphrase of Turpin's Chronicle from the period of the death of Ferragus to the battle of Roncesvalles.

Herkneth, both ying and old,
That willen hearen of battles bold!
An ye woll a while dwell,
Of bold batayls ich woll you tell,
That was, some time, between
Christian men and Saracens keen.

After this exordium the author proceeds to tell us that, while Charles reigned in France, the throne of Lombardy was occupied by a Saracen prince named Garsie, who "leved all in Maumetrie," and harassed the Christians, throughout his vast territories, with unceasing persecutions. Marseilles, and many of the southern provinces of France, were tributary to him; and fifteen kings were proud of serving under the banners of a chief who looked forward to nothing less than

[1] Banner; standard.

whose haughty and presumptuous ch
peculiarly offensive.

Otuel his name was;
Of no man afeard he nas.
Into the palace tho he cam,
A squyer by the hond he na
And said, "Ich am comen h
King Garsie's messangere,
To speak with Charles king
And with a knight that high
And with another hight Olyv
Knightes holden withouten p
Those three I beseech thee
That thou tell me which they

The squire beheld with awe the com
of the stranger, and, respectfully taking
the upper end of the hall, where Charle
throne, a bench on his right hand being
Olivier, and Ogier le Danois. Otuel,
assembly with an air of conscious superi
the imperial seat, and then fixing his eyes

He said to him, amid his hall,
"Sire king! foul mote ye fall!"
Thou art about to grieve
Mahoun, that we on believe;
Therefore have thou

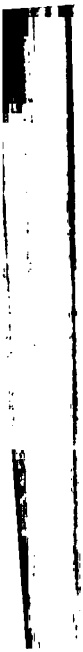
Ich whole wite, so mote ich the,[1]
Right between me and thee!"

During this speech many of the company betrayed evident marks of impatience; but the courteous Roland simply answered, that the insolence of an ambassador might be indecorous, but was not very terrible, particularly when the speaker was not known to have signalised himself by any previous exploits. Otuel now began to enumerate the Christian hounds who had already fallen beneath the edge of his good sword Corrouge, and pursued his narration in terms so offensive that Estuyt of Legiers, one of Charlemagne's knights, seizing a fire-brand from the hearth, aimed a blow at Otuel, which Roland very dexterously intercepted; and at the same time the king himself, interfering, ordered that no one, on pain of his severe displeasure, should presume to attempt any act of violence against a person invested by the general law of nations with a sacred character. The monarch's injunction would perhaps have been obeyed but for the increasing arrogance of Otuel, who scorned to shield himself under the protection of any law, and threatened with instant death whoever should be so presumptuous as to assail him. At these words a French knight, whose name is not mentioned, came behind him, seized him by the head, laid him prostrate on the ground, and, having taken a knife from the table, attempted to stab him. But the Saracen was protected by an excellent coat of mail beneath his robe, and, instantly rising unhurt, drew the terrible Corrouge, and with the first blow cut down the assailant. The hall was now filled with tumult, but Otuel exclaimed with a voice of thunder:

"By the laverd[2] Sire Mahoun,
Knightes! ich rede,[3] sitten adown!
For, if any of you so hardy be,
That any stroke minteth[4] to me,
Mahoun my God ich here forsake,
Gif he shall ever orders take
Of any other bishop's hond,
But of Corrouge my good brond!"[5]

[1] Prosper. [2] Lord. [3] Advise. [4] Aimeth.

[5] It was very common with knights-errant to end their days in hermitages; previously to which they usually received the clerical *tonsure*. Otuel's allusion to this ceremony must have been a favourite joke, a few centuries back, because it appears very frequently in our old romances.



from violence to the ambassador
Indeed a considerable part of the
respect by retiring from the hall, so
Charles and his immediate counsellors

The king now earnestly requested
sword, the retention of which was e
Roland offered to pledge himself for
whenever he should desire to depart
Saracen continued insensible to their c
that if he had twelve squires at his or
himself alone the care of his favourite C
the same menacing attitude. The ki
tinue an indecorous altercation, at leng
ceremony; and, calmly observing to t
personal violence in which he had thou
only tended to render unintelligible the
been ordered to convey, requested t
deliver the purpose of his embassy.

Otuel replied, that Garsie, king of
and of other countries almost innumer
announce his intention of ravaging I
sword, unless Charles should consent
conflict by renouncing Christianity; b
for divers outrages committed, at hi
faithful followers of Mahomet; and by
of allegiance as vassal to the said Garsi

"And certes, [illegible]

Before Charlemagne could offer any remark on these impertinent conditions, the *dousiperes* exclaimed with one voice, that if their sovereign would condescend to lead them against Garsie, they would soon punish him as he deserved, for the insolence with which he threatened to dispose of their lands to his misbelieving Saracens.

"Certes, sire king," quath Otuel,
"Thine Frenche knights can yelpe[1] well;
And when they be to war y-brought,
Thenne be they right naught!
Though thou bring, with shield and spear,
All that ever may weapon bear,
To warre upon the King Garsie,
Certes, all they shoulden die.
And thou art king, and olde knight,
And havest i-loren[2] all thy might,
And in thy yuigthe,[3] take good heed,
Thou were never doughty of deed!"

Even the patience of the temperate Charlemagne was scarcely proof against this wanton personal insult, and the twelve peers were incensed almost to madness. Roland, however, still preserving his dignity, only replied, that should his good fortune in the field lead him to encounter the boasting ambassador, he trusted that he should so behave as to cure him of his contempt for French valour.

"Ough!" quath Otuel, and lough,[4]
"Whereto makest thou it so tough?[5]
Why threat me in another land,
When ich am here at thine hand?
Gif thou havest will to fight,
When ever thou wolt, let thee dight,
And thou shalt find me ready, aplight,[6]
In the field to 'bide fight."
"By God," quath Roland, "ich would be yare[7]
When ich wist to find thee there!
And evil mot he thrive and the,
That first faileth of me and thee!"

The impetuous Otuel immediately named the next morning for the time of meeting; and Roland having with equal eagerness consented to the proposal, the two champions

[1] Boast, Sax. [2] Lost. [3] Youth. [4] Laughed. [5] Difficult. [6] Certainly. [7] Ready.

threw down their gages, and solemnly pledged themselves to the performance of the battle. Charles, though personally insulted by the arrogance of the Saracen, could not help admiring his spirit, and lamenting that such an intrepid warrior should be ignorant of the virtues of baptism. He therefore earnestly conjured him to be baptized, and to forsake his false faith, promising to reward his compliance by the richest investiture that his spacious dominions could furnish. Otuel only answered by fresh outrages; after which the king at length bethought himself of making an inquiry, which perhaps may be thought to have been unusually deferred, into the rank and name of an ambassador, whose ready eloquence was so much more remarkable than his courtesy.

Otuel answered this:

"A kingis son ich am, y-wis,
Sooth to say, and nought to lie,
Ich am the king's cousin Garsie.
Ferragus mine eme was,
That never overcomen nas.
Sir Roland, thy cousin, him slough;[1]
Therefore will rise wo enough!
Therefore I desire so miche,[2]
To fight with Roland sikerliche.
Ich wol tomorrowen in the day
Awreken[3] his death, gif ich may."

The mention of Ferragus convinced Charles that the arrogance and discourtesy of the gallant stranger were family failings, with which it would be useless to contend: he therefore summoned his chamberlain, Sir Regnier, and strictly enjoined him to take care that the representative of King Garsie should be protected against any attack which the eccentric manner of executing his commission might tend to draw down upon him, and be conducted to his *inn*, with all the honours to which, as a knight, he was entitled. Sir Regnier accordingly attended the stranger in person to his lodging, and, taking his leave with due ceremony, returned to court.

Charlemagne had little sleep throughout the night. During an attentive survey of Otuel's person, he had observed in him the marks of unusual strength; inferior perhaps to that of his colossal uncle, but not less formidable, because it was united

[1] Slew. [2] Much. [3] Avenge.

with much address and agility. He began to tremble for his nephew; and, rising before the lark, conducted Roland to church, where they both heard mass and received absolution: but early as they were at their devotions, they found, on their return to the palace, the punctual Otuel already mounted and armed at all points. The malicious Saracen, affecting to overlook his adversary, addressed the king, and inquired after his nephew. "Yesterday," said he, "the knight was full of valour, and eager to fight me; perhaps he has been let blood, and is now in a more peaceful temper of mind." "Thou shalt soon feel," answered Roland, "whether my arm is bloodless." He then hastened to put on his armour; whilst Otuel calmly rode off to the place of combat, a small peninsula on which they could fight without the fear of interruption.

Roland was not slow in following to the appointed spot; but in his eagerness he missed the straight road which Otuel had pursued, and, unwilling to trace back the winding bank of the river, spurred his steed without hesitation, plunged into the water, and swam over to the opposite side. The encounter of the two champions was instant and terrible. Their lances were shivered; their horses floundered at the shock: but the riders were immoveable, and, having taken their ground, drew their swords and began a closer and more decisive conflict. Roland aimed a furious blow at his antagonist, but it glanced by him and pierced the brain of his horse; upon which, with his usual courtesy, he reined back his own, and waited till Otuel had disengaged himself, without offering to renew the blow: but the thankless Saracen only rallied him for his awkwardness in missing a knight, whose stature afforded so fair an aim as to render the butchery of the horse perfectly inexcusable. Otuel, however, was soon guilty of the same awkwardness, and conscious that his raillery might now be retorted, imitated the gallantry of Roland, and waited till he had recovered his feet and could engage on equal terms,—

> And said, "Roland, so mote ich the,
> That stroke ich meant to thee;
> And now it is on thy steed y-stunt,[1]
> Let now stand dunt for dunt."[2]

The foot-combat which now commenced, proved that the

[1] Impressed, inflicted; *stenian*, Sax.
[2] Dint for dint, blow for blow.

the king's daughter; and Otuel, the
proposal, now condescended for the
terms of courtesy. In the mean time
a near spectator of the combat, con
increasing trepidation. Roland, at
made a dreadful blow at the head of
by a sudden motion of his body; but
struck him on the loin with such vi
with one knee to the ground. Charle
Saracen instantly returned a stroke
cut away a considerable part of I
though it produced no effect on the w
to such a degree, that he began to an
death of his nephew. In this extrem
directing all his courtiers to imitate hi
to heaven with all possible fervency t
might be turned, and that he migh
They did so; and the miracle immedia
culver descended through the air, and
multitude, gently perched upon the
retreating a few steps, demanded a pa

And said, "Roland, thou sm
Withdraw thine hond, and s
Gif thou wilt holden that th
That ich shall wed that maid
The kingis daughter Belisent

champions now threw away their swords, and rushed into each other's arms, "embracing and kissing as if they had been brothers;" and Charlemagne, who speedily joined them, felt at least an equal joy in ratifying the conditions offered by his nephew, observing that with four such knights as Roland, Olivier, Ogier le Danios, and Otuel, he might bid defiance to the united powers of the Saracen monarchs. They then repaired to the palace, where they were welcomed by the "mirth and melody of all manner of minstrelsy," in honour of Otuel's conversion; and on the following day the new proselyte received the gift of follaught (baptism) from the hands of Archbishop Turpin.

It was Charlemagne's wish that the wedding should immediately take place: but

Otuel to the king said,
"Sire, keep me well that maid;
Forsooth ich n'ill her never wed,
Ne never with her go to bed,
Ere this war to the end be brought,
And somewhat of thy will wrought.
When King Garsie is slawe or take,[1]
Then is time marriage to make."

Charles, much pleased with the military zeal of his son-in-law, summoned a council of the twelve peers, and referred it to them to decide whether he should immediately assemble such forces as could be brought together and march against Garsie, or wait till the conclusion of the winter. The latter was decided on, and the remainder of the year was passed in making preparations; so that they took the field in spring, with an army not less formidable from its numbers than from its discipline. A day of battle was appointed, as usual, and a field chosen for the purpose, by agreement between the hostile sovereigns; after which, Charles, marching into Lombardy, encamped on a spacious plain, with his advanced guard on the banks of a river, the other side of which was occupied by the enemy. A bridge constructed by the French engineers, where the ground was most favourable to their troops, gave them the means of seizing the best moment for the general attack.

But a bridge afforded a temptation which French knights could not resist; and Roland, Olivier, and Ogier le Danois,

[1] Slain or taken.

though all invested with high commands in the army, were decoyed by the facility of proving their valour, and set off one morning before sunrise in search of adventures. Their first exploit was sufficiently fortunate. They met four Saracen princes, called, "as we find in romaunce," Eurabeles, Balsamum, Astaward, and Clarel; attacked them, killed the three first, made Clarel prisoner, and were returning with all haste to their own camp, when they perceived that their retreat was effectually cut off by a large body of the enemy. It now became necessary either to murder or dismiss their prisoner, who was mounted behind Ogier; and as it would have been base to destroy a knight who had trusted to their loyalty, they liberated Clarel,[1] and after swearing to defend each other to the utmost of their power, and making numberless signs of the cross in token of their unreserved submission to the decrees of Providence, set spurs to their horses, and rushed forward into the ranks of the enemy, through which they were resolved to cut themselves a passage.

The attempt was certainly rather desperate; but the three friends were no common knights, and the Saracens who endeavoured to stop their progress would have acted more wisely by suffering them to effect their purpose. These were Birun, Bassan, and Moter, all three cavaliers of great prowess, who were successively killed, together with a great number of their followers. But the Saracens were now assembling from all quarters. The soudan of Tabarie, named Carmel, arrived in time to rally the fugitives, and, attacking Ogier le Danois, threw him, severely wounded, to the ground. Another soudan, called Anawe of Nubia, rode to meet Olivier, and unhorsed him. Roland indeed killed them both, and enabled Olivier to remount; but while these two heroes were with great difficulty making their way through the crowds which opposed them, the wounded Ogier was still on foot, assailed on all sides, and effectually cut off from his companions. At this moment, King Clarel perceived his situation, and, riding up, advised him to surrender, and received his sword.

Clarel was no wedded man;
Clarel had a fair leman,

[1] During their debate upon this subject, Olivier swears "by the laverd [illegible] *Richard;*" by which it would seem that our Richard I. had, when [illegible]nch original of this romance was composed, been canonised by [illegible]l authority.

That was hoten[1] Aufanie,
And was born in Ermony.
Clarel, anon rights,[2]
Cleped[3] to him two knights,
And said to him anon,
"To my leman shall ye gon,
And say that I sent her this knight,
And, that his wound be healed aright,
And good heed to him nom,[4]
To saven him till my to-come."[5]

Whilst Ogier was thus made prisoner by the man whom he had hoped, a few hours before, to carry to the feet of Charlemagne, and whilst Roland and Olivier were glad, after a long and dangerous struggle, to save themselves from the same calamity by a precipitate flight, Otuel had quietly concerted the best measures to repair the bad effects of their rashness. Having armed himself and all his knights, he repaired to Charlemagne,

And said, "Sire, ich dwell too long!
Roland, Olivier, and Ogier the strong,
Over the water alle three
Beth y-went,[6] for envy of me,
To look where they mighten speed
To don any doughty deed,
Among the Saracens bold:
And I should be coward hold.
Therefore I ne will no longer abide;
To sechen hem ich wol ride.
Though they habben envy of me,
Ich will, for the love of thee,
Fonden[7] whether ich might comen
To helpen hem, lest they weren y-nomen.
And gif hem any harm betit,[8]
Let hem witen her own wit."[9]

The king expressed to him the most lively gratitude, and earnestly entreated him to push forward with all possible expedition, assuring him that the whole army should be immediately marched forward for the purpose of assisting his efforts. Otuel, therefore, having with him many of the *dousiperes*, and all the youngest and most active of the French

[1] Called. [2] Right anon; immediately. [3] Called. [4] Taken. [5] Arrival. [6] Are gone. [7] Try. [8] Hath happened; betided. [9] Thank their own wisdom.

hands of the enemy.

"Alas! alas!" quath Otuel,
"This tiding liketh me noug
Sire Charles, my lord the k
Wol be sorry for this tiding
For Godis love, hie we bliv
And look we whether Ogie

Roland and Olivier were not less an recover their lost companion; and the were exerting their utmost speed for th way was crossed by a Saracen, whose scribed his qualities, the huge and red Otuel, with the rapidity of lightning, champion, and overthrew his black h Olivier, and Estuyt of Legers, bore Garsie's officers, and thus set an examp French knights, which they followed v tuosity. A king of India, named Er mace of brass, ventured to attack the gal him with a violence which would hav hero; but was soon punished for his t from the head to the shoulders. Clar of the remaining Saracens, was able to o to the French knights, and to stop fo order of his own troops; who, however, a total defeat by the approach of night,

begged in the first instance to know his name, having had many opportunities, during the late battle, of witnessing his unparalleled prowess.

"By God, fellow," quath Otuel,
"Ere this thou know my name full well!
So God shield me from shame,
Otuel is my Christian name!
Mahoun ich habbe forsake,
And Jesu ich habbe me take."

This discovery produced, as might be naturally expected, a violent dispute and quarrel between the Christian convert and the rigid Saracen, and ended by a determination of fighting, next morning, a duel in the Christian camp; Otuel having previously pledged his honour that no insult should be offered to his antagonist, and that the merit of their respective religions should be fairly tried by an appeal to the sword. Clarel was punctual to his time, and at day break appeared fully armed before the royal pavilion; where, relying on his safe-conduct, he thought fit, while expecting the arrival of Otuel, to amuse himself with insulting the venerable person of Charlemagne,—

And said, "Charles, thou art old!
Who made thee now so bold
To warren upon King Garsie,
That is chief of all Paynie?
All Paynie he haveth in wold;[1]
Thou doatest, tho thou art so bold!"

Charles, it must be confessed, had submitted to still greater insults from Otuel; but then he had been in some degree taken by surprise; besides which that chief, was a privileged ambassador, and moreover the nephew of Ferragus the giant; whereas he was now elated with victory, and thereby rendered so irascible that he determined on the instant to punish Clarel's presumption, and actually sent for his armour and prepared for the combat. It is even probable that the expostulations of Roland and of his other knights would have been insufficient to deter him from his purpose: but Otuel, to whom he had lately paid much more deference, convinced him that no personal offence ought to prevent the decision of a quarrel founded on a theological dispute; and consequently that his majesty, though he had "sworn his oath," ought in the present instance to desist, leaving to him the task of

[1] Government.

sary, which nearly stunned him, and
repay.

Otuel, for wrath, anon
Areight' him on the cheel
All tho fell off that was th
And made his teeth all ba
Tho Otuel saw his cheek-l
He gave Clarel a scorn an
And said, "Clarel! so sm
Why shewest thou thy tee
I nam no tooth-drawere!
Thou ne seest me no chain
Clarel feeled him wounded
And was maimed for everr
And smote to Otuel with a
And Otuel, that doughty k
With his sword kept the d
That Clarel him had y-mea
And yet the dint slode ado
And smote Otuel upon the
Quath Otuel, "By Godis o
Saracen, thou smitest full s
Sith then thy beard was y-
Thou art woxen a strong k
Otuel smote Clarel tho
O stroke, and no mo,

marched forward for the purpose of assailing him. The armies soon met; and the battle began, as usual, by a skirmish of the principal officers on both sides. A Turquein of great prowess, but whose name is not mentioned, rode against Roland, and caused him to lose one of his stirrups, but on a second charge was killed by the Christian knight. A second, named Myafle of Bagounde, unhorsed and wounded Olivier, but was instantly pierced by the spear of Roland. A third, called Galatin, was slain by Otuel. At the same time a young and beardless knight, followed by a troop of bachelors, all under twenty years of age, nobly seconded the efforts of the three Christian heroes, and spread terror through the ranks of the Saracens. He had even the honour of capturing a Turkish prince, named Coursaber, and of sending him as his prisoner to Charlemagne; but, being carried too far by his impetuosity, was in imminent danger of being killed by the terrible Poidras of Barbary, when he was rescued by Otuel, who assaulted Poidras so violently "that there he lay like a sticked swine."

Garsie, who perceived that many of his best knights had fallen, and that the dangers of the battle were likely to approach his sacred person, began to feel great displeasure; and calling to Arperaunt, one of his favourite advisers, reminded him that the defeat of the French and the punishment of Otuel had been solemnly decreed in council, and requested him to propose immediately some easy means of carrying that decree into effect. Arperaunt frankly confessed that whilst Roland and Olivier were alive, and Otuel continued to brandish his good sword Corrouge, he saw no mode of accomplishing those salutary measures: upon which Garsie, addressing himself to Baldolf of Aquilent, a general of known hardihood, ordered him to stop the fugitives and lead them against the Christians, promising to follow in person with the rest of the army, and to assist in the capture of Otuel.

Quath Baldolf, "By Sire Mahoun,
Laverd, we will don what we moun[1].
And come thou after, and take heed
Which manner that we speed;
And, gif thou seest that need be,
Come and help us ere we flee.

[1] May.

Ogier, was speedily killed, after wh
Saracens became irrecoverable.

The Saracens were so adr
Into the water many fled;
Some swam, and some sun
And cold water enough th

The author has now the good natur
tunate Ogier le Danois, whom he had
prisoner, under the care of Clarel's le
nian began by curing his wounds; b
Clarel, treated him with great severity
a dungeon under the guard of seven
there was a noble squire, who took pit
determined to share his fortunes. Thr
recovered his horse and arms, and fort
of the seven knights, his jailors; and
castle-gate, obtained the means of esca
of the same squire, who persuaded the
two adventurers going in search of pl
camp, and promised him a share of t
the good Ogier liberated from prison,
good fortune of contributing his shar
comforture of the unbelievers. Thou
night without once alighting, the joy o
panions, Roland and Olivier, and the
Saracens, prevented his feeling fatigue
refreshment; and it may be presume

King Garsie saide this;
"For his love that God is,
Taketh me alive, and slayeth me nought;
Let my life be for-bought![1]
And let me, as a prisoun,[2] gon
Before King Charles anon,
And don him homage with mine hond.
To holden of him all my lond."

Otuel observed to his three companions, that there seemed to be no objection to saving the life of a man whose death would be perfectly unprofitable to all parties, and they having agreed in the same opinion, he conducted his prisoner to Charlemagne, and explained to him that Garsie had only stipulated for the preservation of his life, and had voluntarily consented to a state of unconditional vassalage and dependance on the crown of France.

Thus ends the Auchinleck MS.—In the continuation of the story, Otuel appears to be almost forgotten, though his name occurs two or three times towards the end of the romance, for the sole purpose, as it should seem, of justifying its title. I have already observed that such a continuation would scarcely deserve notice, but that it presents us with the concluding scene in Turpin's history, the battle of Roncesvalles.

Charles having thus terminated the campaign of Lombardy, led his unsuccessful rival to Paris, where Garsie, convinced that it was out of the power of Mahomet or Apolyn to obtain for him such terms as he might secure by embracing Christianity, consented to be baptized by the hands of Archbishop Turpin. Soon after this, Charles received intelligence that Ibrahim, king of Seville, having united his forces with those of the king of Cordes, was encamped near that city; he therefore collected an army with all possible expedition, and marched to attack them. He found them

With batayles stern ten;
The first waren foot-men
That grisliche were of cheer;
With hair they were be-hong,
And beardys swithe long,
And hornes in hond hare.

These ugly troops were also provided with numberless bells

[1] Ransomed. [2] Prisoner.

the discordant noises of these uncouth horses, which were perfectly unprepa such musicians in masquerade, utte them, and when roused by the spu astonishment into which they had be pected sight, suddenly dispersed in al ing the French infantry with the rapi them into confusion; after which, co to the body of reserve, they hurried magne, together with his twelve peers field of battle.

The infantry, having at length gaine nence, were easily rallied, because the further; but it was not till late in the joined by the cavalry, when the king pitch their tents. On the following m that the ears of all the horses in the a stopped with wax, and that they shoul hood-winked; after which he marched to meet the enemy. The Saracens we turn; but maintained an obstinate con sacred standard, which was carried in oxen. On this occasion, Charlemagne heroism, and drawing his good sword the midst of his enemies, forced his w in two the long and massive spear o and shortly after clove the skull of the

infidels are rewarded by the crown of martyrdom; and if this were not a matter of course, it was in the present case secured by the express promise made by St. James to Charles in his sleep. Now the good king wished to know how many of his knights were predestined to lose their lives on this occasion, and prayed to heaven that his curiosity might be satisfied. Accordingly the intended victims were all marked with a red cross on their shoulder; but Charles, finding their number much greater than he expected, and wishing to obtain a cheaper victory, left them all behind in a place of security, attacked the enemy, gained the battle, and returned without loss. In the mean time those for whom he had been thus solicitous had all expired: and thus did the good king learn that it is useless to oppose the designs of Providence.

Having at length secured the submission of Spain, by distributing all his conquests either amongst his own friends or amongst those of his benefactor St. James, Charlemagne became desirous of returning into France; but feeling some uneasiness at leaving behind him two Saracen kings, named Marsire and Baligand, who then resided at Saragossa, he dispatched an ambassador to inform them that they must immediately consent to be baptized, or else pay him tribute. The ambassador whom he chose for this mission was the celebrated Guines or Ganelon, whose duty to his sovereign and to his country was soon overpowered by a present of thirty *somers* (beasts of burthen) laden with gold and silver, which the artful Saracens offered to him on condition of his undertaking to lead the French army into the defiles of the forest of Roncesvalles.

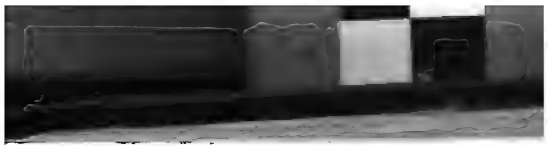
> And thritti steedes with gold fine
> To Charles sent that Sarrazin,
> All they were white as flour;
> And an hundred tuns of wine,
> That was both good and fine,
> And swithe fair colour.[1]

At the same time they permitted Ganelon to make, in their name, whatever promises he might think necessary for preventing any suspicions in the mind of Charlemagne.

[1] Gaguin, in his translation of Turpin, adds to this present a thousand beautiful damsels, "pour en fair à leur voulenté," and further explains to us the real cause of the terrible disaster which befel the Christians; this gift having been too tempting for their virtue.

valles, than he found himself attack
Saracens, who had been previously po
and had concerted every measure for t
tians. Roland, as might be expected
sistance, and, being assisted by all the
nearly annihilated the first body of
Saracens continued to receive constan
the Christians were exhausted by fatig
stantine of Rome, Ogier le Danois, R
Sir Bertram the standard-bearer, and m
after performing prodigies of valour, w
Olivier, covered with wounds, was a
and Roland, after singly cutting his wa
perceived that all hopes of retreat were
remained for him but to seek for an
honourably in the field.

After wandering for some time in the
a single Saracen, whom he secured and b
which, having gained an eminence from
cover the situation of the enemy, he sou
collected round him a small number of
and, returning with them to his prisoner
promised him life on condition that he
them the person of King Marsire. T
obeyed, and showed him the king mounte
and bearing a golden dragon on his s
Roland, setting



As he it held in his hond.
"O sword of great might,
Better bare never no knight,
To win with no lond!
Thou hast y-be in many batayle,
That never Sarrazin, sauns fayle,
Ne might thy stroke withstond.
Go! let never no Paynim
Into batayle bear him,
After the death of Roland!
O sword of great powere,
In this world nis nought thy peer,
Of no metal y-wrought;
All Spain and Galice
Through grace of God and thee, y-wis,
To Christendom ben brought.
Thou art good withouten blame;
In thee is graven the holy name
That all things made of nought!"

After these words he rose, and, exerting his whole force, struck the sword against a rock in hopes of breaking it: but Durindale sunk deep into the solid stone; and when he had with some difficulty drawn it out, he found the edge uninjured.

The dying hero now blew his ivory horn, in hopes of drawing round him some friends, if any such had escaped from the battle, to whom he might consign his sword, and who might join with him in prayer during his last moments. No one appeared. He made a second effort, and with such violence that he burst the horn, and at the same time so distended all his veins that his wounds began to bleed most abundantly, and soon reduced him almost to extremity. The sound of this blast was distinctly heard in the army of Charlemagne, who wished to return in search of his nephew, but was persuaded by Ganelon, that Roland could be in no danger, but was most probably amusing himself by hunting in the forest. It brought, however, to Roland, two of his companions, Sir Baldwin and Sir Terry, who having escaped the general slaughter had been hitherto wandering through the forest, and whom he sent in search of some water, which however they were unable to find. In the mean time a Saracen, coming by chance to the spot where the hero lay, endeavoured to carry off Durindale; but Roland, suddenly starting up, wrenched

angels.

Archbishop Turpin was, at this
the souls of the dead, and distinctly
angels, who were, however, too dista
same time he discovered and intern
fiends, who were flying to hell with t
and who reported to him the deat
instantly notified to Charlemagne.

The good king instantly set off to
being met by Sir Baldwin, who con
the devils, was conducted by him t
over which he swooned two or three t
learned but tedious lamentations.'
vengeance; and, having first prayed
might be stopped for him, as it had f
(a favour which was readily granted
against Saragossa, where Baligand ha
this battle, Sir Turpin distinguished l
extraordinary valour, as did also Sir
Charlemagne, and Otuel, of whom w
but who is now brought forward for
Perigon, king of Persia, whilst Tur
destroying the treacherous Baligand.
cens, it seems, were slain in this lo
after which Charles returned to the fa
where Sir Terry, having formall-

With swithe great dolour;
Rolandys body he let dight,
With myrrh and balm anonright,
With swithe good odour.
Both Roland and Oliver,
And everych of the dussyper
With balm weren y-dight;
Of some, withouten fail,
Men didden out the entrayle,
And in lead layd hem aright:
And tho that weren nought so,
Full well in salt men did hem do,
To be sweet both day and night.

I shall conclude the extract from about eleven hundred very insipid lines in the words of the author:

Here endeth Otuel, Roland, and Olyvere,
And of the twelve dussypere,
That dieden in the batayle of Runcyvale:
Jesu lord, heaven king,
To his bliss hem and us both bring,
To liven withouten bale!

SIR FERUMBRAS.

The following romance, I believe, was never printed. A MS. copy of it existed in the library of the late Dr. Farmer,[1] and a transcript from this copy, made by the late Mr. Steevens, was presented by him to my friend Mr. Douce, who kindly permitted me to re-transcribe it. It is professedly translated from the French, and contains 3386 lines. The original may possibly be the Fierabras, of which there is a copy in Bibl. Reg. 15 E. vi. Skelton, in his poem of Ware the Hawke, mentions it by the name of Syr Pherumbras; and Barber, in his poem of The Bruce, B. iii. v. 437, mentions The Romanys of worthi Ferambrase, the adventures of which are related by Bruce to his followers.

It may probably occur to the reader that this story ought to have preceded those of Ferragus and Otuel; because it is absurd, after having accompanied Roland and his companions to the end of their pilgrimage in this world, and even to their peaceable establishment in the next, that we should again bring them forward, and engage them in a new and independent scene of action. But an absurdity more or less, where romances are concerned, was thought of little consequence; and as the most rational

[1] See Bibliotheca Heberiana, part xi. p. 162.

As it is written in romaun
And founden in books of
At Seynt Denyse Abbey in
There as chronicles reme
it will be found that a mighty soudan,
reign of Babylon, who possessed the r
more on the river Flagote, was a te
Christians, whom he drove out of the
kings and fourteen amirals fought unde
conquests, and particularly the capture
mistress of the world, must be attribute
the Christians than to the number or val
It befell, between March an
When kind corage begin
When frith and fielde waxe
And every wight desireth
When lovers slepen with op
As nightingales on greene
And sore desire that they co
That they mighten with t
This worthy sowdan, in this
Shope him to greene woo
To chace the boar, or the ve
The wolf, or the bear, or
He rode the

Being at length tired of hunting, he sat down under a tree on an eminence which commanded an extensive view of the sea, and, perceiving a ship at a small distance from the shore, sent an attendant to hail the vessel, and to inquire for news. The officer soon returned, attended by the ship's interpreter, who, addressing the soudan, informed him that their cargo was of immense value, consisting of rich furs, spicery, oil, brass, pearls, and precious stones, freighted at Babylon, and intended as a present for his majesty; but that, having been driven by stress of weather to Rome, they had been robbed of the best part of this treasure by the Romans; and humbly begged leave to solicit that he would denounce his royal vengeance against the authors of this insult.

Laban, highly incensed, made a vow to Mahound and to Apolyn, that he would without loss of time exterminate all the inhabitants of the guilty city; and sent pressing orders to all his tributary kings and amirals to attend him on an appointed day with the whole forces. Seven hundred sail of vessels were assembled to convey the army, and a large ship was fitted up for the purpose of carrying the soudan, together with his son Ferumbras, king of Alexandria, and his daughter Floripas.

Two masters were in the dromound,
Two goddes on high sitten there
In the master-top, with maces round,
To manace with the Christian lere.[1]
The sails were of red sendele,[2]
Embrowdered with rich array;
With beasts and birds, every dele,[3]
That was right curious and gay.

The fleet having a prosperous passage, Laban caused his army to be disembarked near the mouth of the Tyber; and, leading them towards Rome, laid waste the whole country on his passage, and filled the city with consternation. The pope assembled his council to consult on the best means of defence; and they, instead of suggesting any, advised that messengers should be sent to Charlemagne, imploring his timely assistance: but Rome still contained one brave man, named Sabaryz, who persuaded them to delay this timid measure, and to make, in the mean time, such exertions as were in their power. Inspiring the Roman soldiers with a zeal similar to

[1] Wherewith to menace the Christian doctrine. [2] For *cendale*, silk. [3] Part.

his own, he, after providing for the defence of the walls, directed a sally against the enemy:

The stour[1] was strong, enduring long;
The Romans hadde there the field;
The Sarrazins they slew among,
Ten thousand and mo, with spear and shield.

He then retreated in time, and, having suffered little loss, was received in Rome as a tutelary deity. In the mean time Lukafere, of Baldas (Bagdat), one of Laban's tributary kings, had been scouring the country; and with such success that he brought into the Saracen camp no less than ten thousand Italian virgins, for the use of the soudan and of the army: but the soudan happened to be out of humour from the loss which he had just sustained, and ordered the virgins to be slain; so that, says our author, they all became martyrs, "and thereof were they all full fain."

If chastity, carried almost to excess, was at that time the distinguishing quality of the Italian ladies, it does not appear that humility was the favourite virtue of their conqueror; for the same Lukafere, having taken this opportunity of demanding the princess Floripas for his wife, voluntarily pledged himself to her father to bring the emperor Charlemagne with all his *dosiperes* in chains to the foot of his throne. The soudan could not refuse the highest reward for such a service; and Floripas herself, though not at all enamoured of the king of Baldas, readily agreed to accept him when he should have fulfilled these conditions. But in the mean time Laban enjoined him the much easier task of assaulting, with thirty thousand men, the city of Rome; and Lukafere without hesitation undertook to execute the task. He advanced; discovered with some surprise that a wide and deep ditch was an obstacle to his intended attack; vainly tortured his brains to devise some expedient for overcoming the difficulty; and returned, after suffering some loss, to state the impossibility of the enterprise.

Laban, who had been accustomed to issue his commands without inquiring whether their execution was practicable, grew very angry, and cursed all his gods for suffering a vile ditch to intervene between him and the completion of his wishes; but not being fertile in contrivances, he sent for his engineer, Sir Mabon, and commanded him to suggest an

[1] Battle.

invention which might answer his purposes. Mabon humbly represented to him, that if the ditch were filled with faggots his majesty's troops might easily pass over it; and the soudan, after commending in terms of rapturous admiration the ingenuity of his engineer, gave orders for this necessary measure; and directed that the city should, on the following day, be assaulted from all quarters.

But the brave Sabaryz was still within the walls: the Saracens, after a long conflict, were repulsed with considerable loss; and the soudan became almost mad with vexation at this second disappointment. Lukafere, however, by the assistance of a spy, was now provided with a stratagem which succeeded. He was told that Sabaryz would, on the following day, attempt a second sally; and that, by causing a banner to be made exactly similar to that of the Romans, he might easily gain admittance within the gates. Sabaryz, returning from his expedition, discovered too late the artifice of the enemy, and in vain endeavoured to recover the tower of which they had obtained possession.

By then he found the gate shette,
With Sarrazins that had it won;
And Estragot with him he mette,
With boar's head, black and dun.
For as a boar a head he had,
And a great mace strong as steel;
He smote Sabaryz as he were mad,
That dead to ground he fell.
This Estragot of Ethiope,
He was a king of great strength;
There was none such in Europe,
So strong and so long in length.
I trow he were a devil's son,
Of Belsabubbis line,
For ever he was thereto y-wone[1]
To do Christen men great pine.

After the death of Sabaryz, the pope again summoned his council, and all now concurred in the necessity of dispatching an embassy to implore the assistance of Charlemagne. On the following day the Saracens again tried a general assault; the fleet was brought up to the Tyber, with their "boats bounden to the mast," for the purpose, as it should seem, of

[1] Accustomed.

And brake them all on
In he entered at the gate,
The porte-cullis they le
He weened he had come t
It smot him through he
He lay cryand at the grou
Like a devil of hell;
Thorough the city went th
So loud then gan he yel

This fortunate event inspired the be
Though frequently summoned to surr
defending the city; and at the close o
tion of seeing the enemy once more c
considerable loss.

The pope now formed a most despe
ing that the Saracens, after the death
perfectly secure from any further en
the besieged, he proposed to march ou
thousand men, leaving ten thousand fo
and to attack the enemy in their cam
was well concerted, and the surprise w
for the vigilance of Sir Ferumbras,
about an hour before day-break, disco
Romans, sounded the alarm, and in th
against the assailants. The attack, l
ported; Sir Bryer of Apulia, and
Gyndarde, three knights in the Roma

Supposing in his thought
There was the sovereign,
He spared him therefore nought,
But bare him down there in the plain.
Anon he sterte on him allane,
His ventayle for to unlace;
And saw his crown new shane,[1]
And shamed then he was.
"Fie priest, God give thee sorrow!
What doest thou, armed in the field,
That shouldest say thy matins on morrow?
What doest thou with spear and shield?
I hoped thou hadst been an emperour,
Or a chieftain of this host here;
Or some worthy conquerour:
Go home, and keep thy quere![2]
Shame it were to me, certain,
To slay thee in this batayle,
Therefore turn thee home again!"
The pope was glad thereof sauns faile.
He went home to Rome that night,
With five thousand and no more;
Fifteen thousand left in the field aplight.
Full great sorrow was therefore.

This disastrous event might have ultimately led to the render of Rome, but its immediate capture was the effect treason. Ispres, a man who possessed by inheritance the mand of the principal gate, repaired to Laban, and offered betray his charge on certain conditions, which were readily mised: but Ferumbras, who was ordered to receive possion of the gate, caused the traitor's head to be struck off the port-cullis, and to be carried on the point of a spear ore his troops, while he proceeded to the pillage of the city.

Ferumbras to St. Peter's went,
And all the relics he seised anon;
The cross, the crown, the nayles bent,
He toke them with him everych one.
He did despoyl all the cité
Both of tresor and of gold;
And, after that, brent he
All that ever might be told.

[1] Newly shaven. [2] Quire. [3] Certainly.

milk and honey there
That was royale and
Serpents in oil were fri
To serve the soudan
"Antrarian! Antrarian!"
That signifieth "Joy

Whilst the soudan was thus feast
campagna of Rome exhibited to the
was advancing to its relief, the most
tion. The messengers had reached
and that monarch had taken measures
the utmost speed; but as his preparati
and the distress of the Romans was pr
Guy, duke of Burgundy, at the head o
readiness, with orders to keep the e
arrival. Sir Guy immediately hasten
Saracens were already disembarked; th
still smoking; the neighbouring cou
enemy, afforded no means of subsist
necessary to halt at some distance, an
of the royal army. This series of b
perated Charles, who swore to be reve
put him to death, unless he should
reliques and to abjure his idolatry; a
self, as people usually do on such o
freshed by his oath, he began to take
steps which were necessary for its

"I charge you, upon your legeaunce,
That ye bring me that glutton,
That clepeth himself king of France,
Hither to my pavillon.
Keep him alive: the remenant sle,[1]
The twelve peers each one;
I thall teach him courtesie,
I swear by god Mahoun!"

Sir Ferumbras, Sir Lukafere, and the other Saracen knights immediately seized their arms, and hastened to a skirmish with Roland, Olivier, and the rest of Charles's knights. The skirmish became a tremendous battle, in which the Saracens were so severely handled, that Ferumbras was obliged to confess to his father, that their gods, "what devil so ever them ailed," had not blessed their arms with victory. Charles, on the other hand, being rather proud of the feats which he had achieved with his good sword Joyeuse, but unwilling to arrogate to his own efforts the whole success of the day, chose to share it only with the elder knights of his army, whom he praised in terms so exclusive, that his nephew, the impetuous Roland, conceived himself and his brethren in arms to be unjustly slighted, and soon took an opportunity of expressing his displeasure.

The author now presents us with a prayer to "the red Mars armipotent," who is invoked either by Laban, or by some other person, to succour the Mahometans against the Christians; and then abruptly proceeds to assert the necessity, or at least the propriety, of falling in love during the spring of the year; and these digressions lead him to describe the nations, which are quite sufficiently numerous, from which Laban recruited the late losses in his army.

All these people was gathered to Agremore;
Three hundred thousand of Sarrasins fell;
Some bloo, some yellow, some black as Moor,
Some horrible and strange as devil of hell.
He made them drink of beastys' blood,
Of tiger, antelope, and camalyon[2],
As in her use to eager their mood,
When they in war to batayle gon.

[1] Remeinder slay.

[2] Meaning, probably, the camelopardalis. The blood of a camelcon would go a very little way towards satisfying a thirsty Saracen.

fight singly against Roland, Olivier,
Naymes, Ogier le Danois, and Richa
Charles replied, with proper temper,
his best knights he could easily find
singly, be adequate to a combat with
however sent for Roland, and orde
challenge.

Roland answered, with word
And said, "Sire, have me
He said, certainly he ne wol
The batayle utterly he refu
"The last day ye praised faste
The old knights of their w
Let them gon forth; I have r
They may go shewen their
For that word the king was v
And smote him on the mou
The blood out of his nose ou
And said, "Traitour! thou
"Abye," quoth Roland, "wol
And traitour was I never r
By that lord, that me dear ha
And brayde[s] out Durindale
He wolde have smitten the k
Ne hadde the barons run b
The king withdrewe him f—

ı confined to his bed suddenly rose, on hearing of this ıute, and, hastening to the king, demanded the battle with ı earnestness that Charles was forced to acquiesce. He ı put on his armour, mounted his horse, and rode to the ining forest, at the skirts of which he found Ferumbras, ı had dismissed his attendants, and was sitting on the ınd under a tree, to a branch of which his horse was ured. The Christian knight courteously saluted the Sara- , and proposed the combat: but Ferumbras, without alter- his posture, coldly demanded the challenger's name; and ıg told that it was "Generys," only observed that Charles a fool to send him such an adversary, and desired the posed youth to return and tell him so.

"How long," quoth Olyver, "wilt thou plead?
Take thine arms, and come to me;
And prove that thou sayest in deed,
For, boast thou blowest, as thinketh me."

'erumbras, roused by the stern and menacing tone of these ds, instantly seized his helmet, which Olivier courteously sted him to lace; after which, the combatants, politely ing to each other, vaulted into their saddles, rushed toge- · at full speed, shivered their lances, and then drawing r swords commenced a tremendous combat, of which, be- se it passed without witnesses, the author has given a very ute description. Olivier, by an accidental stroke, cut off bottles of balm which were trussed to the saddle of his ıgonist, and having seized them, threw them into the river, he great indignation of the Saracen, who represented that contained a medicine of sovereign virtue, and that such ss was absolutely irreparable. The battle therefore, after new injury, continued with increased obstinacy; but such the skill of both, that after a laborious contest of some rs, during which neither had been materially hurt, they ıped by mutual consent to rest themselves and take breath. his pause naturally introduced a parley; for the Saracen, vinced by the blows which he had endured, that his enemy t be one of the twelve peers, earnestly requested him to are his real name.

Olyver answered to him again:
"For fear I leave it not untold;
My name is Olyver, certain,
Cousin to King Charles the bold;

vigour: at length, however, the swo
he ran to the steed of Ferumbras, v
and seized a fresh sword which was
but in turning on his adversary, recei
which forced him to bend with
At this moment Charles, who had
discovered him from the camp in
to portend his approaching defeat,
great fervency that his sick nephe
over the healthy Saracen. His pr
angel brought him the welcome intell
Olivier aimed at Ferumbras a blow w
and laid open a part of his side, prod
most violent effusion of blood. The
fessed himself vanquished, and imp
adversary.

" I am so hurt I may not sto
I put me all in thy grace
My gods ben false by water
I renye them all, here in
Baptized now wole I been.'

He then requested Olivier to acc
to carry him, if possible, to Charles
Saracen army, which lay concealed
to advance about this hour of the day
were lost, cut off their retreat.

In fact this friendly intimation
enemy approached so fast that Olivie
sit his wounded

him by the arrows of the more distant: he had, in his haste, neglected to take with him his trusty Durindale, and had seized a common sword, which now broke in his hand; so that being on foot and unarmed, he was at length borne down and made prisoner by a crowd of assailants. Olivier beheld, and attempted to prevent this misfortune; but his horse also being killed by the showers of darts which fell upon him, he was in a similar manner overpowered, made captive, and conducted, together with Roland, to the ferocious Lukafere. Charlemagne made every effort for the rescue of his nephews: and the evening was far advanced when, after an unavailing pursuit, in which the enemy suffered severely, he consented to give orders for the retreat. In returning to the camp, however, he had the good fortune to meet the wounded Ferumbras, whom he prepared, in the first instance, to put to death, in revenge for the captivity of his relations; but being moved by his piety and contrition, and reflecting on the advantages which might accrue to Christianity from the conversion of such an important personage, he conducted him to his tent, caused him to be attended by his own surgeons, and, after his recovery, directed Turpin to instruct and baptize him by the name of Floreyn. He continued, however, during the whole of his military life to be known by his original appellation, and only assumed the latter during his declining years, which were passed in acts of holiness and contrition.

Roland and Olivier being conducted to Laban by Lukafere, were questioned by him respecting their names and rank, which they instantly avowed; and the soudan, with as little hesitation, vowed a vow to Mahomet that they should both be executed the next morning, a little before dinner. But being as ready to break his vows as to make them rashly, he determined, by the advice of his daughter Floripas, that the said knights should be detained as hostages for his son Ferumbras; but that they should be thrown into a deep dungeon, and debarred from all food until the return of Charlemagne's prisoner. It may be necessary to observe, that the walls of Laban's palace were in part washed by the sea; that within these walls was a garden, and beneath this garden were the cells of the dungeon, which, therefore, at high tides were nearly filled with water. Such was, during six days, the lodging of our brave knights, who had certainly some reason to complain, and who did complain so loudly that they at length attracted the attention of Floripas. The princess wb

and repairing to a window in a
sea, suddenly called to Marigou
poises, who were sporting bene
herself forward to behold the
making a sudden effort, pushed
was instantly drowned.

" Go there," she said;
My counsel shalt t
Whoso will not help
An evil death mote

Floripas now repaired with th
marte, the jailer, whom she hoped
or more complying than her duen
Britomarte, not satisfied with refus
to impart it to the soudan, and act
purpose; but the active princess,
seized the *key-clog* which hung fro
vigorous blow dashed out his brain

To her father forth she g
And said, " Sire, I tell
I saw a sight that was m
How the false jailer fe
And how the covenant m
When they should deli
Wherefore, I slew him w
Dear father, forgive it
" My daughter dear, that a
The ward of them now
Let their sorrow be ever
Till

kicked her governess out of window, knocked out the brains of a jailer, and cheated her father, for the purpose of saving from destruction two of his most inveterate enemies. It was an eventful day; and scarcely more so at the court of Laban than at that of Charlemagne.

This good king, having summoned his council, declared to them his intention of sending Guy of Burgundy, as his ambassador, to the soudan, with a message importing that, "if the said soudan did not immediately restore his two nephews, together with the reliques taken at Rome, he might expect the most dreadful consequences from Charles's vengeance; and that all his gods would not be able to save him from destruction." On hearing this strange resolution, Duke Naymes of Bavaria, the wisest and most venerable of the counsellors, ventured to represent that such a message addressed to such a man would expose its bearer to certain destruction. "By God!" said Charles, "Sir Guy shall go, and thou shalt share his danger!" This indeed was not quite a legitimate argument; but it was an answer which seemed likely to preclude all further discussion: it however produced a very different effect from that which the king expected. Ogier le Danois, Béry l'Ardennois, Fulk Baliante, Le Roux, Iron of Brabant, Barnard of Prussia, Bryer of Bretagne, and even Archbishop Turpin, successively declared themselves of the same opinion with Duke Naymes, and remonstrated against the absurdity and injustice of the measure; but Charles, growing more and more angry, gave to each in his turn the same answer: and having dismissed them all on the same dangerous errand, seemed to think that the loss of his twelve peers in the field was well compensated by their absence from his councils.

It was somewhat remarkable that the same measure, to which Charles resorted in direct opposition to all his friends, was at the same time adopted by Laban, at the unanimous instance of his wise men; and that twelve Saracens of high rank were sent to demand the liberation of Ferumbras, in terms no less insulting than those employed in the instructions of the French ambassadors. The delegates from both sides met in a plain, near the city of Mantrible; saluted each other; and mutually communicated their respective orders; after which the Saracens wished to proceed on their journey, but were prevented by Sir Guy, who defied them to an immediate trial of arms. The result was that the Mahometans were all killed; and their heads being cut off, were separately

And confound Laban, i
That on Mahound bi
And give them evil en
To-morrow, long ere
He commandeth thee, t
His nephews home t
And the reliques of Ra
And else gettest thou

He then proceeded to relate
had killed by the way twelve awl
to be sent from Aigremor, with a
king; and then produced the head
Laban, in a great rage, answered
sufficiently, he would, in the first
but that he would then order th
this resolution he confirmed by a
instantly persuaded him to bre
charge of the prisoners, till a ge
should have determined on the
punishment conducive to the rel
bras. The princess, therefore, car
introduced them to their friends
having desired them to point ou
formed them that, from the favou
she had, without seeing him, bei
gentle knight; that it was her wi

Full of noble mighty wine,
She said to him, "My love, my lord,
My heart, my body, my good is thine:"
And kissed him with that word.
And, "Sire," she said, "drink to me,
As the guise is of my londe,
And I shall drink again to thee,
As to my worthy husbonde."

This solemn ceremony being concluded, Floripas informed her guests that she had in her power a great variety of excellent suits of armour; that on the following morning they would do well to array themselves in these, and when the soudan should be at dinner, to assail him and his guests, and to obtain possession of the castle.

This salutary measure was very nearly disconcerted by Sir Lukafere of Baldas, who, before the soudan went to table, requested his permission to visit and interrogate the prisoners. On approaching the chamber of Floripas, he found the door locked; but as he was a man of little ceremony, he burst it open with a blow of his fist, and entered. Finding nothing to excite his suspicions, he entered into conversation with Duke Naymes; and, after many inquiries respecting the court of Charlemagne, asked what were the usual amusements of the knights during the intervals between one meal and another.

"Sir, some men just with spear and shield,
And some men carol, and sing good songs;
Some shoot with dartes in the field,
And some playen at chess among."[1]
"Ye ne be but fools of good disport!
I wole you teachen a new play;
Sit down here by one assort,
And better mirth never ye seigh."[2]
He tied a thread on a pole,
With a needle theron y-fast,[3]
And there upon a quick coal;
He bade every man blow his blast.
Duke Naymes had a long beard,
King Lukafere blew even to him;
That game had he never before lered:
He brent the hair of Naymes' beard to the skin.

This conflagration incensed Duke Naymes, who set great store by his long beard. He snatched a burning log from

[1] At intervals. [2] Saw. [3] Fastened.

absence of his friend Lukafere
to hasten their enterprise; ar
seat at table when they rushe
guests to the sword, excepting
closely pursued by Olivier, ha
window, and falling on the soft
without injury. The surprise
complete; the knights found t
soudan's principal treasures, of
abundance, and of a considera
though Laban immediately sent
principal citadels, to collect the
they had hopes of receiving ass
the mean time the fair Floripas
present advantages with confiden

"Therefore go we sup an
And taketh ye alle yc
And thirty maidens, lo l
The fairest of them ye
Take your sport, and kit
When ye shall have to
On to-morrow when the
Ye must to the walles
And defend this place wi
And with shot of quare
My maidens and I will br
So everich

any intercourse between the besieged and the Christian camp, by sending orders that no person, under whatever pretext, should be suffered to pass the bridge of Mantrible. This bridge, over a dangerous torrent, was guarded by the terrible giant Algolufre.

Of Ethiope he was y-bore,
Of the kind of Astopards;
He had tuskes like a boar,
And head like a libbard.[1]

He had suffered the French knights to pass the bridge, because he had no orders to the contrary; but being now commanded to be more cautious, he swore that he would stop all comers, and exerted all his ingenuity in forming, with four and twenty iron chains, a sort of net-work, through which no human strength could force a passage.

The soudan, however, was too impatient to abstain from his daily assaults, in which he was sure to lose some of his best warriors, or from his daily imprecations against his daughter, which she returned from the walls with equal volubility. At length Mersadage, king of Barbary, on whom he had the greatest reliance after the death of Lukafere, was killed by Sir Guy, who shot him with an arrow.

Mersadage, king of Barbary,
He did carry to his tent,
And buried him, by right of Saraceny,
With brenning fire and rich ointment;
And sung the dirige of Alkoran,
That Bible is in their lay,
And wailed his death everych one, &c.

After which it became necessary to revert to the opinion of the wise men, by changing the siege into a blockade.

As the twelve peers were fond of good living, their stock of provisions was, in fact, very soon exhausted; but Floripas possessed a resource with which the wise men were unacquainted. This was a magical girdle, which exempted those who wore it, even during a few minutes, from feeling in the course of the next four and twenty hours the effects of hunger and thirst. The besieged, therefore, still continued to wait, with perfect tranquillity, till the soudan should renounce his enterprise; and he continued from day to day to wonder at their perseverance, till at length he bethought himself of the fatal girdle, and employed a thief of uncommon dexterity,

[1] Leopard.

called Mapyne, to steal it. Mapyne introduced him through the chimney into the chamber of Floripas, put on girdle, and was preparing to retire when the princess awo and by her cries brought Roland into the room. Rol with one blow, struck off the head of the thief; and consi ing the body as of little value, threw it out of the win into the sea, but was soon informed by the lamentation Floripas that he had thrown away their whole magazin provisions. The knight now regretted no less than the p cess his precipitate act of vengeance, but he in some mea repaired his mistake on the following day by surprising enemy's camp, and carrying off a convoy which insured to little garrison several weeks' subsistence.

But to the twelve peers of France a besieged castle almost as tiresome as a prison. They enjoyed, indeed, pleasure of mortifying Laban to such a degree that he tre his gods, and even their priests, with the utmost indigni they suffered his men to assault their walls till the castle d was filled with assailants, whom they then crushed v showers of stones; and at other times threw among the racen troops the choicest pieces of plate in the soudan's t sury, till his avarice compelled him to sound a retreat. they were anxious above all things to inform Charlemagn their situation, and deputed Richard of Normandy, on their number, to undertake this dangerous commission.

For the purpose of occupying the attention of the enem the moment of his departure, his eleven companions ma sally which fully answered this purpose; but their va hurried them too far: Sir Bryer of Britany was killed, they experienced a still greater misfortune in the loss of gentle Sir Guy of Burgundy, who after cleaving to the sa a wicked king of Babylone, was overpowered by numbers carried prisoner to Laban. The soudan, on hearing his n which he was too proud to conceal, ordered that on the fol ing morning he should be hanged on a lofty gallows, in view of his mistress, and that a large body of the bra troops in the army should attend the execution and preve rescue. Floripas was in despair, and the knights in greatest affliction; but Roland, perfectly indifferent to numbers of the enemy, having directed his friends to rushed forth at their head, overturned all who opposed t and made his way up to the prisoner, after killing a ki India, who was fortunately possessed of an excellent l

and sword, at the same moment that Olivier cut down Sir Tampere, the intended executioner. They then unbound Sir Guy, armed him, placed him on the Indian king's horse, and after a second charge, which threw the Saracens into complete confusion, again turned towards their citadel. But before they reached the gate they fell in with a convoy:

Costroye there was, the amiral,
With vitaile great plenté,
And the standard[1] of the sowdon royal,
Toward Mantrible ridden hi.[2]
Four chariots y-charged with flesh and bread,
And two other with wine
Of divers colours, yellow, white, and red,
And four someres of spicery fine.

Flushed with victory, the ten companions determined to attack the escort, and to carry off the convoy; but in the first instance thought fit to banter poor Costroye, and gravely proposed to him to share these dainties with them, a request which he, of course, refused with indignation.

"O gentil knight," quoth Olyvere,
"He is no fellow that will have all!"
"Go forth," quoth the standard, "thou gettest none here,
Thy part shall be full small!"
"Forsooth," quoth Roland, "and shift we will,
Get the better who get may;
To part with[3] the needy it is good skill;
And so shall ye, by my fay!"

With these words he rode up to the amiral, and divided his head and brain with great accuracy, whilst Olivier pierced the heart of the standard-bearer. The whole escort was dissipated in an instant; the provisions were conveyed into the castle; and the tender-hearted princess, rejoiced at the rescue of her lover, generously proposed to the chief of the French knights a recompence which she thought best suited to her obligation.

Florype said to Roland than,
"Ye must chesen ye a lieve,[4]
Of all my maidens white as swan."
Quoth Roland, "That were a mischief:
Our lay will not that we with you deal,
Till that ye Christian be made;

[1] Standard-bearer. [2] They. [3] Divide, share. [4] Choose yourself a mistress.

Nor of your play we will not feel,
For then were we cursed indeed!"

whereby the maidens of the fair princess preserved their chastity some time longer.

We will now leave the soudan to his eternal quarrels with his gods, whom he threatened at every sinister turn of fortune to throw into the flames, and attend upon Richard of Normandy, who, escaping unobserved from the castle of Aigremor, had taken the road to Charlemagne's camp, and arrived without accident as far as Mantrible. But on reconnoitring the famous bridge, he saw the giant on the watch by the side of his curious net-work of chains.

When Richard saw there was no gate[1]
But by Flagote the flood,
His message would he not let;
His horse was both big and good.
He kneeled, beseeching God, of his grace,
To save him fro mischief:
A white hind he saw anon in that place,
That swam over to the cliff.
He blessed him in Goddis name,
And followed the same way,
The gentil hind that was so tame,
That on that other side gan play.

By means of this miracle the good knight was enabled to reach the Christian camp; but on his arrival was not a little surprised to find the whole army in motion, and marching towards the sea-coast, with the apparent intention of quitting the country. Charles, it seems, had been persuaded by the traitor Ganelon that it was useless to wait any longer for his twelve peers, who were probably killed, and equally useless to attempt without them the recovery of the reliques which had been so long in the possession of Laban. But the sight of Richard, and the information which he conveyed respecting the brave men in the castle of Aigremor, instantly recalled him to himself, and induced him to lead his army with all possible speed to the bridge of Mantrible.

But the giant and his net-work presented an obstacle which it was not easy to overcome by mere force. Richard therefore proposed that the army should halt on its march within the verge of the adjoining forest, while he and twelve more knights, disguised as merchants, with packs on their horses,

[1] Way.

should endeavour to get over the bridge, or at all events engage the giant in a parley, during which Richard would blow his horn as a signal that the army must hasten to his assistance. Algolufre, seeing them approach, asked whither they wanted to go?

Richard spake to the geaunt,
And said, "Toward the sowdon,
With divers chaffer, as true merchaunts,
We purpose for to gon,
To shew him of pelure and grise,[1]
Orfrays[2] of Perse imperial;
We wol thee give tribute of assay,
To pass by licence in especial."

Algolufre, true to his instructions, refused to let them pass; but as it was not contrary to his duty to tell them a story, he told them all about the twelve knights who had done so much mischief to his master Laban, and was a good deal surprised when Richard, in the midst of this relation, suddenly broke the thread of his narrative by blowing his horn with the greatest violence. The giant had very long arms and a stout oaken pole headed with steel, which he wielded with such dexterity as to keep at bay the crowd of valiant knights who now assailed him, till

Richard raught[3] him with a bar of brass
That he caught at the gate;
He brake his legs; he cried, alas!
And fell all check-mate.
Loud then gan he yell,
They heard him yell through that cité,
Like the great devil of hell;
And said, "Mahoun! now helpe me."
Four men him caught there,
So heavy he was and long,
And caste him over into the ryvere,
Chese he whether to swim or gong.[4]

The knights now loosened the chains, and advanced towards the walls of the city, but were suddenly assailed by another monster not less formidable than Algolufre, though of a different sex. Her name was Barrok, and she mowed down the Christians with a scythe without appearing at all disturbed by their resistance.

[1] Furs of different sorts. [2] Embroidery. [3] Reached. [4] Go

" Unharm him fast and bring him near,
I shall his god-father be:
Fill it full of water clear,
For baptized shall he be.
Make him naked as a child,
He must plunge therein;
For now must he be meek and mild,
And y-wash away his sin."
Turpin took him by the hond,
And led him to the font;
He smot the bishop with a brond,
And gave him an evil brunt.
He spitted in the water clear,
And cried out on them all,
And defied all that Christian were,
That foul may him befall!

The intended proselyte being so untractable, and continuing to vent his rage in violent imprecations against his son and daughter, there remained no alternative but to order him to immediate execution; and accordingly

It was done as the king commaunde;
His soul was fet to hell,
To dance in that sorry land,
With devils that were full fell.

It now only remained for Charlemagne to acquit himself of his many obligations to the fair Floripas by marrying her, immediately after her baptism, to her dear Sir Guy, on whom he bestowed, as a marriage portion, one-half of Spain, at the same time that he confirmed Sir Ferumbras in possession of the remainder. He then, after exhorting these two princes to preserve through life the sentiments of fraternal affection for each other, and of friendship towards him, took a tender leave of them, and returned with his army to France, where he deposited his precious reliques in the principal churches of Paris and St. Denis. The story ends with the execution of the traitor Ganelon, who was hanged on a lofty gibbet at Montfaucon.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SEVEN WISE MASTERS.

THE French minstrels, the early Italian novelists, and the author of Gesta Romanorum, were indebted for a variety of stories translated by Petrus Alphonsus from the Arabic, and perhaps originally furnished to the Arabians themselves by some of their eastern neighbours. Another work which our ancestors unquestionably borrowed from the East, and which, passing in succession through almost all the languages of Asia and Europe, preserved, under every change the same degree of popularity which it had acquired in its native idiom, is the collection of fables vulgarly attributed to Pilpay or Bidpai. These indeed, as far as I know, were never translated in their original state by our English minstrels: but there is a third work, equally of oriental origin, and of not less celebrity than either of the foregoing, which has furnished us with an English metrical romance, named in the Cotton. MS. "The Process of the Sevyn Sages," or, to use the more familiar and popular title of the prose translation, "The Seven Wise Masters;" and it may be reasonably expected that the analysis of this romance should be preceded by a history of the different forms under which it has been successively exhibited.

This, however, is a matter of extreme intricacy, and which had never been completely investigated excepting by Douce, who, by pursuing the hints thrown out by Tyrwhitt, Warton, and others, has traced a great part of the materials employed by our early fabulists to their remotest sources, and to whose notes I have been obliged for all the information which I can venture to offer on this obscure and difficult subject.

There is good reason to believe that the prototype of this romance was "The Book of the Seven Counsellors, or Parables of Sendebar or Sandabar," an Indian philosopher, who is stated by Ismael Sciah-hinsciah, an Arabian compiler of a chronicle from Adam to the year of the Hegira 487 (A. D. 1094), to have lived about a hundred years before the Christian era.[1] He is sometimes called *chief of the sages of India*. These parables have been printed in Hebrew only, under the title of *Mischle Sandabar*, first at Constantinople in 1517, and afterwards at Venice in 1544 and 1608, at the end of another Hebrew work, entitled "The Words of the Days of Moses."[2] There is a MS. of them in the British Museum, among the Harleian MSS. No. 5449, written in a very bad hand. It has an anonymous Latin note, the substance of which is, that it had been translated out of the Indian language into Persian and Arabic, and from thence into Hebrew, by Rabbi Joel. The Latin title is "Historia de Rege et Filiis ejus ex Orient. *India*. Nomen ejus fuit Biebar." The word in Italics is written in a different hand, as is also the following note at the bottom of the page: "Historiola de Biebar Rege Indorum Orientalium et Filiis

[1] The exact period at which he flourished is unknown, but two Oriental writers cited by M. Deslongchamps mention the third century B.C.

[2] Groddeck Descr. Rabbinic. apud Placcii Theatrum anonym. et pseudonym. Hamburgi, 1708, p. 688; et Wolfii Bibl. Hebraic. i. 931.

ejus." At the end of the MS., which consists of fifty-six leaves in small quarto, on a flying leaf, the contents of the work are again described.[1]

As we have no rational ground for hoping that the Indian original, if it ever existed, will again be brought to light, it is much to be wished that we could obtain a literal version of the ancient copy, which is likely to be of little interest to the Hebrew scholar, but would be very valuable to the literary antiquary, and perhaps not unamusing to the general reader. Indeed it seems to be owing to a sort of fatality that we do not already possess such a translation, because it appears, by the Latin documents accompanying the Harleian MS. already mentioned, that Gilbert Gaulmin, professor of the Hebrew language at Paris, actually completed the work, which he illustrated with notes, and intended for publication, but never fulfilled his intention. After his death, the learned Groddeck, professor of oriental languages at Leipsig, entered into the same engagement. It is also supposed that a Latin version by Wagenseil exists in MS. in the Senatorial library at Leipsig;[2] besides which, James Bonaventura Hepburn, a Scotchman of the order of Minims, a great traveller and learned Hebraist, and overseer of the oriental books in the Vatican, is said to have translated into Latin the Parables of Sandabar with the Gests of the Seven Wise Men.[3] In the mean time, the reader will have perceived that the foregoing documents are not even sufficient to explain to us whether Sandabar was the author of the book to which he has given his name, or only the essential character in the piece. Neither do we know any thing satisfactory concerning Rabbi Joel, nor even the time in which he lived, though there are reasons for supposing that he must have written as early as the middle of the 14th century.

After the Hebrew version of the Parables, the next in point of antiquity which occurs is in the Greek language, and known to the learned under the name of *Syntipas*. Of this many MSS. are extant, but it is not easy to ascertain from what original it was immediately borrowed. A MS. cited by Du Cange professes to be translated from the Syriac;[4] as does a second imperfect one procured by the celebrated Busbequius from Constantinople, and now in the Imperial library at Vienna;[5] and a third, said to exist at Moscow, and to have been written before the 14th century. On the other hand, a copy in the British Museum professes to have been translated from the Persic so late as 1667.[6] Monsieur Dacier has written an express dissertation on the Syntipas, of which he found a MS. of the

[1] "In hac scilicet historiolâ seu fabulâ agitur de calliditate fœminarum, et quomodo *earum* prudentiâ filius regis Indiæ nomine Baïber a morte sit liberatus. Sandabar iste erat princeps sapientum Brachmanorum Indiæ, et magnam habet partem in totâ hac historiâ. In fine libri dicitur Sandabar obiisse annos natus 130." The word *earum* is evidently a mistake, and perhaps copied from Wolfius, who (Bibl. Hebr. i. 931) gives a similar description of the work; whilst Groddeck, who has also gives an account of it, seems to ascribe the wisdom and prudence to Sandabar.

[2] Wolfii Bibl. Hebr. i. 931. [3] Demster Hist. Eccles. Gent. Scot. p. 364, and Mackenzie's Scotish Writers, iii. 516. [4] Dufresne Gloss. med. et infim. Græc. Ind. Auctor. p. 73. [5] Ness. Catal. Bibl. Cæs. Vindob. par. v. 171. [6] Harl. MSS. No. 5560.

16th century, written on paper, in the French National Library, No. 2912. This pretends to be a literal version from the Syriac. It has an argument by the translator, followed by a short advertisement, stating that the same history had been written in Persic by one Musus or Moses. The outline of the story, as given by M. Dacier, is as follows.

Cyrus has seven wives, but no children. At length, after putting up prayers to Heaven, he has a son who is placed in the hands of a tutor: but the young prince, after a period of three years, deriving no benefit from his instructions, is committed to the charge of the philosopher Syntipas, who engages to complete his education, and return him to his parents at the end of six months and as many days. He is conducted to a house on the walls of which his master had caused the planets, the history of the world, &c., to be painted for his instruction, and here becomes, within the stipulated time, so accomplished as to surpass his tutor's expectations. Syntipas, before he decides on reconducting the prince to his father, consults the stars concerning his destiny, and finds that his life will be in great jeopardy unless he can preserve, during seven days, a strict silence; which the prince undertakes to do. Syntipas resolves to conceal himself in the mean time, in order to avoid the natural resentment of the king on finding his son mute. Cyrus is, in fact, greatly enraged; and, being persuaded by his courtiers that Syntipas has given his son some medicine which has deprived him of speech, searches in vain for the philosopher. At length one of the king's wives undertakes to discover the cause of the prince's silence, and, in a private interview with him, attempts to seduce him to her embraces, offering to place him on the throne by putting his father to death, on condition of his taking her to his bed. The prince, struck with horror at this atrocious proposal, and unable to preserve silence, replies, "Know, wicked woman, that I am for the present prohibited from answering you; but, at the end of seven days—" and then becomes mute as before. The disappointed woman in revenge accuses him of having attempted her chastity, and he is condemned to die. The king, however, has seven philosophers, who, suspecting the falsehood of the charge, engage to employ a day each in endeavouring to dissuade the king from executing the sentence. This leads, of course, to the stories, each philosopher relating two, and the princess replying with as many. The seventh day at last arrives, and the prince, breaking silence, relates the cause of it, and exposes the wickedness of his accuser. Cyrus now propounds as a question to the philosophers, Whether, if he had put his son to death, the prince, or the lady, or himself, would have been guilty of a crime? He is not satisfied with their opinion, and the question is at last resolved by the prince himself, in an apologue, to which he adds two other whimsical stories, of which, says M. Dacier, it is difficult to comprehend the moral. The lady is then ordered into court; and having confessed her guilt, the king inquires of the philosophers what punishment she deserves. Very cruel tortures are proposed. She relates a story to prove that it is better to survive, even in a mutilated state, than to die. The prince then suggests, as a punishment better suited to the offence, that she should have her head shaved, and be publicly led through the city on an ass; and this sentence is immediately carried into execution. Cyrus, enchanted with his son's wisdom, demands of Syntipas how it

happened that he had acquired so much knowledge in so short a time. He ascribes it to the influence of the star under which he was born, and tells a story to show that all education is useless where a malignant planet has presided at the child's nativity. This is the last story; and is followed by many moral questions put by the king to his son, who resolves them.

The next appearance of the Parables was in Latin. This is said to have been written by Jean de Hauteselve, or Altavilla, in Lorraine. Whether any copy of it be now existing is a matter of great uncertainty. Even its title is unknown; nor should we perhaps have ever heard of it, but for its translation into French verse, whence it assumed the strange denomination of DOLOPATOS.

This singular work was first brought to light by Fauchet, who, in his account of the early French poets, ascribes it to one Hebers or Herbers, an ecclesiastic, whom he rightly supposes to have lived under the reign of Louis VIII., who died in 1226.[1] M. Dacier says that Hebers' translation is only known from fragments in Fauchet, and in Du Verdier, who copies Fauchet, and in a collection called "Le Conservateur," for January, 1760; the latter of which had been supplied from a MS. in the Sorbonne, which has since been sought for in vain.[2] He does not appear to have seen any MS. of it; for which reason it may be of use to point out one which has lately, at the request of Mr. Douce, been inspected by his friend the Abbé de la Rue, a gentleman well known to the English reader by his valuable essays on the early French poets, in the 12th, 13th, and 14th volumes of the Archæologia. This MS. is in the National Library at Paris, is numbered 7535, and was written in the 13th century. It contains about 9000 verses. At the beginning are these lines,

Un blanc moine de bele vie,
De Halteselve l'Abeie,
A ceste histoire novelée;
Per bel Latin l' a ordenée,
Herbers le velt en romans traire.
* * * * *
Si com Dans Jehans nous devise,
Qui en Latin l'istoire mist,
Et Herbers qui le romans fist:
Del Latin en romans le traist,
Ce fu il tens que la flors naist.

The history takes place under the reign of Augustus Cæsar. Dolospatos, king of Sicily, is the father of the young prince, who is called Lucinien. Virgil is his tutor.

Au tens qu' Augustus tenoit Rome,
Qui sires fu de tant prodome,
Fu nés un rois, molt noble hom,
Qui Dolospatos avoit nom.
Sages hom ert, et de grant los;
Por ce, ot nom Dolopatos.

Although several of the stories in this work are extremely licentious, Hebers has not scrupled to commit it to the care of a dignified ecclesiastic.

[1] Œuvres de Fauchet, fo. 560, verso, edit. 1610, 4to.
[2] Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscr. xii. p. 557.

Hebers define ici son livre;
A l'evesque de Meaux le livre,
Qui Diex doint honor en sa vie.[1]

It has already been observed that it is not certain whether any copy of Hauteselve's Latin work be now remaining. There is indeed a book entitled "*Historia Calumniæ Novercalis* quæ Septem Sapientum inscribitur (sive Historia Heracliti, autore D. Joanne Monacho Abbatiæ vulgo dictæ Hauteselve seu Hauteseille)," printed at Antwerp by Gerard Leen, 1490, quarto. On this title, which is copied from the catalogue of the printed books in the king of France's library, vol. ii. p. 4, M. Dacier remarks, that the words in the parenthesis are not in the book itself; and that the editor, in a short preface, declares the title to be of his own invention, and that he has assumed the liberty of changing the names of the characters and correcting the style. The book is extremely rare; but Mr. Douce was convinced by a fragment of it which he inspected, that it was not Hauteselve's work, but substantially a different Latin history of the Seven Wise Men, which will be mentioned presently, newly written and arranged.

The next work to be noticed is one of which no account whatever has hitherto been given, though it will be found to merit some attention. It is a MS. of the thirteenth century, in the French National Library, numbered 7595, in French verse, but by an anonymous author. There is no mention in any part of it either of Hauteselve or of Herbers, and its bulk is not equal to more than one-third of the Dolopatos. The emperor is Vespasian, son of Mathusalem, and the wise men are Bacillas, Lentulus, Cato, Malquidas, Jesse, Damnas, and Birons. Mr. Douce believes, with great appearance of probability, that this work was the immediate original which gave rise to the many subsequent imitations in French prose, and of which our English metrical romance is a translation.

This poem, in lines of eight syllables, is to be found entire in the MSS. of the Cotton library, (Galba. E. ix.), where it is entitled, "The Proces of the Sevyn Sages." Mr. Douce had conjectured that it was composed about the end of the fourteenth century; but there is in the Auchinleck MS. a large fragment of it, consisting of 2630 lines, and as its composition must have preceded the transcription, and the age of the MS. itself has been ascertained with some accuracy, we cannot assign to the poem a later date than 1330.

Soon after the invention of printing, the Latin "Historia Septem Sapientum" appeared in Germany, and there were many editions of it without date, place, or printer's name. The earliest, perhaps, which occurs with a date, was printed at Cologne by John Hoelhoff, in 1490, quarto, with cuts. Translations of it soon appeared in the German, Dutch, Italian, French, Spanish, and English languages. This is our "*Seven Wise Masters*," so truly delectable, till lately, to every school-boy, the first edition of which was printed by W. Copeland, without date, but between 1548 and 1567. It was also translated into Scottish metre by John Rolland, in Dalkeith, "at the request of his *Ant Cait* (Aunt Kate) in Tanstelloun Castle, during the siege of Leith, 1560," and printed at Edinburgh in 1578, 1592, and 1631, octavo.

[1] Œuvres de Fauchet, fo. 561.

" History of Prince Erastus, son to
famous philosophers called The Seve
translated from the French Erastus, an
the Italian original, and added *all* that
ing The Seven Wise Masters; but his
has omitted two or three stories which
He tells us, in his preface, that the book
such estimation in Ireland, that it was a
children immediately after the horn-bo
Erastus was published by some person
work. This last is, however, a wretched

It may be worth while to mention tha
he really did consult a MS. of the Gre
liberties with it that his work by no mea
lation. His introduction is considerably
has many new incidents. The prince is
philosophers, and not to one tutor. The
of the wise men, is apparently invented f
the assertion in the title and preface. Th
number of those in the Syntipas, in whic
Latin *Historia Septem Sapientum;* and
imitated.

We have thus traced our original, th
all its transmigrations in the European
patience be not quite exhausted, it will
steps, for the purpose of noticing some c
not a little to embarrass and mislead the
inquirers into the subject.

Towards the close of the fifteenth cen
of some unknown German printer a
" Directorium Humanæ Vitæ, alias
the parab

naturally lead to a supposition that the "Directorium" was taken from the "Mischle Sandabar;" yet it is in fact nothing more than an altered translation of a work long since known to the learned by the name of *Calilah u Damnah*, and to the world in general by the title of Pilpay's Fables, the Indian original of which is the *Heetopades* of Veeshnoo Sarma.

It is not easy to ascertain by what means the name of Sandabar made its way into the Latin "Directorium." It certainly is not in the Heetopades, where the name of the sage who relates the stories is Veeshnoo Sarma; neither is it from the other Oriental versions of the same work, because in the Persian and Turkish copies the philosopher is called Bidpay; and in the Arabic, or at least in the Greek version from the Arabic, made by Simeon Seth, and printed, with a Latin translation, by Starkius in 1697, he is not named at all. Neither does there seem to be any positive authority for ascribing a Hebrew translation of this work to Rabbi Joel, excepting that of Doni, the reputed author of an Italian version, or rather imitation of the Directorium, who seems to have first introduced the name of Joel, inferring, perhaps, that he must have translated this work, as well as the Mischle, as being also composed by Sandabar.

Another source of confusion and perplexity arises from the perverse disposition of all the translators or imitators of the Book of "the Seven Counsellors" to alter and disfigure, though perhaps with the hope of improving, their immediate original. The several copies therefore are so much unlike, that only *one* story in the modern Erastus agrees with the Greek Syntipas, and this is also to be found in the Calilah u Dammah. (See Tyrwhitt, vol. ii. p. 492, 4to. edit.) Some stories in the Dolopatos are common to the Fables of Alfonsus, who, on the other hand, has one tale which is also in the Syntipas. It is not, therefore, a mere similarity in some of the materials which will enable us to trace the successive imitations of the Oriental fabulists to their original prototype; we are forced to examine the general design and outline of the work; and after having done so, it will but too frequently happen that the patient labour of the antiquary is productive of little amusement to the reader.

It only remains to be stated, that the following abstract is generally taken from the fragment in the Auchinleck MS., as being the most ancient copy now known to exist, and that the conclusion has been made up from the MS. in the Cotton Library already mentioned. The latter is certainly more modern, by at least half a century, than the Auchinleck fragment, and is written in the Scottish dialect.[1]

[1] A very valuable MS. of this romance is preserved in the Public Library at Cambridge, and was printed by Mr. Wright for the Percy Society, 1845. Mr. Wright's interesting Preface will furnish the reader with many curious particulars respecting the romance not known to Ellis. The Cottonian MS. has been published by Weber.

youth in one of the seven liber
the honourable task with gratit
with their pupil to the Consistor
a place in Rome where "men
that it would be necessary to
enticements of the metropolis,
the better prosecution of his stu
the city. The spot selected for
verger (orchard) on the banks o
with all sorts of fruit-trees. In it
consisting of seven chambers, e
hall, on the walls of which were
Donet[1], and the seven arts, viz.,
geometry, arithmetic, rhetoric, a
man, occupied only with his st
ferred from one master to anoth
gress. In the fourth year of
dispute on logical questions; in t
argument of the stars and of the
end of the sixth year, he evinced
not without reason, was consider
miraculous.

With a view to ascertain the d
general science, they one night
of the four posts of his bed four
formed the experiment, retired v
the morning

Other wexen is the ground[1]
The thickness of four leaves round!
So much, to night, higher I lay,
Certes, than yesterday."

The reader will readily believe that before the expiration of his seven years' study, this prodigy of attention had acquired all the science of his Seven Wise Masters.

Diocletian, perfectly happy in such a son, had hitherto borne without repining the solitude of widowhood; but his counsellors now urged him to marry again, and proposed to him a young princess of such exquisite beauty that the old monarch became violently enamoured of her, and soon appeared to forget, in her company, every other object of his affection. So completely were the perfections of Florentin obliterated from his memory, that he did not even mention his name to the empress; but as every other tongue was employed in his praise, she naturally became anxious to behold this paragon, and had no difficulty in persuading the emperor to summon him to court.

The Seven Masters were "disputing in their Latin" with their young pupil, when they received the visit of the nobles appointed to signify the emperor's intention, and to attend the young prince during his solemn entry into Rome: and as the preparations for such a ceremony could not be suddenly completed, the imperial messengers were detained to dinner, and amused by the tales of minstrels; after which the Seven Wise Men prepared to consult the stars, as a necessary preliminary to the important expedition of the following day. Caton, the most expert of the seven, took a very deliberate survey of the moon, and discovered, from some untoward appearances on the face of that planet, that the first moment when the young prince, after his arrival at court, should open his lips, would prove fatal to him, and, very possibly, to all his instructors. This dreadful prophecy filled the whole company with consternation; but though Caton could not be suspected of falsifying or misunderstanding the moon's testimony, Florentin chose to examine the heavens in his turn; and having critically observed the aspect of a star almost in contact with the moon's limb, predicted from it, that if he could preserve his life during seven days, and pass that time without speaking, the danger which menaced him would be

[1] Or grown is the earth.

passed, and he might expect many years of security and happiness.

This second prediction having been duly examined, and found conformable to all the rules of astrology, the Seven Wise Masters took comfort; and as their pupil observed to them that it would be most extraordinary if each of them were not able to save his life during a single day, they prepared to encounter the approaching danger with serenity, returned to their guests, and next day accompanied them to court, where Florentin was received by his father with every mark of affection. Diocletian, drowned in tears of joy, was himself unable to speak, and consequently did not remark the silence of the youth, who expressed also by his tears and embraces the sincerity of his filial duty; besides which, their interview was only momentary, as the empress, on hearing of Florentin's arrival, immediately requested his attendance in her own apartment.

Of the mental perfections of her son-in-law she had heard so much that her curiosity was completely satisfied, but of his person she knew nothing; and this produced at first sight so deep an impression on her mind, that not being in the habit of curbing her passions, she immediately ordered her attendants out of the room, and proceeded without reserve to communicate to the astonished Florentin the feelings which he had awakened, and the facilities which her marriage with his father might afford for their gratification. Her eloquence on this topic was so rapid and abundant that it was long before she gave the prince an opportunity of making any reply, but at length she naturally began to expect an answer, and was not a little astonished at his invincible silence. She flattered herself with the hope that this might arise from mere bashfulness and timidity, and proceeded to try every mode of encouragement; but her silent companion recoiled from her touch with such signs of horror, that she could not long doubt of his contempt and aversion.

Then the empress wex wroth;
She tare her hair and her cloth.
Her kirtel, her pilche[1] of ermine,
Her kercheifs of silk, her smock of line,[2]
All together, with both fist,
She to-rent beneathen her breast.

[1] A kind of furred cloak. [2] Linen.

With both honden her yellow hair
Out of tresses she it tare;
And she to-scratched her visage,
And gradde[1] "harow" with great rage.
In hall was the emperour.
"Who hath thee done this dishonour?"
"Bot[2] this devil that here is,
Had me near y-honisht[3] i-wis!"

She then proceeded to state that the marks of violence about her person were the effects of his brutal rage, and loudly demanded the instant death of the ravisher.

As the youth and beauty of the empress gave some degree of probability to this horrible accusation, and the supposed culprit continued obstinately silent, the indignant emperor immediately gave orders that his unnatural son should be stripped and scourged, and afterwards hanged: but no sooner were these orders made public, than the lords who were then in the palace interposed to prevent their execution, and obtained from the reluctant Diocletian a promise, that the heir of the empire should be exempted from this ignominious punishment until he should have been tried before an assembly of the nobles.[4] The court was therefore summoned for the succeeding day; and the prince, in the mean time, was ordered into close confinement.

This delay was by no means pleasing to the empress. The dumb man might change his mind and speak in his turn; and his asseverations were more likely than her own to be credited by his judges, amongst whom his rank and his virtues had procured him many partisans. It would save her much trouble if she could persuade the emperor to act from himself; and for this purpose, when he came to bed at night, she told him the story of

THE PINNOTE-TREE AND ITS IMP.

There was once at Rome a burgess, who, having enriched

[1] Cried. [2] Who but. [3] Brought to shame, Fr.

[4] A copy of this romance in MS. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38, tells the tale somewhat differently. According to that authority, the king goes "to hys towre" till his anger is somewhat abated, when his steward arrives and reminds him of a promise he had made to grant him his first request in consideration of favours done in war. The steward then requested that the life of the prince should be spared for one day.

himself by traffic, purchased a handsome house with a fair garden adjoining,

Full of apple-trees and of perry,
Fowles sung therin merry.
Amidelward[1] that garden free,
So wox a pinnote[2] tree,
That had fair boughs and fruit,
There-under was all his dedut.[3]
He made there-under a green bench,
And drank there-under many a skench.[4]
Certes, therein was all his playing,
In time of solace and his resting.

As the whole sphere of the burgess's observation was confined within this single arbour, he could not fail of discovering a small *imp* (sucker) which was at length put out from the root. He watched this imp with daily attention; but as its growth was much slower than he wished, he called his gardener and inquired why the imp did not grow faster? The man replied, that being overshadowed by a large branch of the parent tree, it did not obtain its due share of light and moisture. The burgess now ordered the branch to be cut away; and the sucker having rapidly increased after this experiment, a second and a third branch which interfered with its progress were successively sacrificed to it, until its luxuriance and the abundance of its foliage formed a striking contrast to the naked and unsightly appearance of its once flourishing parent. At length the burgess became disgusted with his original favourite, and caused it to be cut down, lest the small quantity of nourishment which it still continued to derive from the soil should in future impoverish its rival. "Such, sir," said the empress, "will shortly be your fate. You are the old tree, and Florentin is the imp, which, long fostered under your shade, now grows with luxuriance, and only wants room for more expansion. He has once set you at defiance, and lives to glory in his crime. Vengeance, perhaps, is still in your power, but if deferred, the means of inflicting it will be lost, and you will be shoved from the throne to make room for the more powerful Florentin." Diocletian loved a story to his heart; and though, during its

[1] In the middle of.
[2] "The name of a red-stocked and round-leafed vine."—Cotg ave.
[3] Pleasure; delight. A. N.
[4] Draught.

recital, incapable of discerning its application, was marvellously struck when this application was explained to him. He had been long accustomed to reign, and was fit for little else; so that being now induced to consider his son as a rival, he determined most firmly to order his immediate death, and flattered himself that the justice of the action would be applauded by all who should hear the story of the Pinnote-tree and of its Imp.

The hall was already filled with barons and with persons of all ranks, when the emperor took his seat, and repeated his orders of the preceding day. The prince was taken out of prison, led naked through the hall, and conveyed towards the place of execution amidst the universal murmurs of the senate and people; but the youth himself continued obstinately silent, and no one appeared to plead his cause, till the philosopher Bancillas, making his way through the assembly, and approaching the throne, began to remonstrate with the emperor on his injustice and cruelty. Diocletian was at this time very much out of humour, and answered the polite salutation of the Wise Master, "*Deu vous doint bon jour*," by imprecating all sorts of curses on his head and on those of his six companions, who, being selected to educate the heir of the empire, had taken from him the use of his tongue, and bestowed on him in return a most ungovernable propensity to rape and incest. Bancillas, in reply, asserted Florentin's innocence; earnestly conjured the emperor to disbelieve the testimony of a step-mother, and finally assured him, that should he sacrifice his son he would be tortured by unavailing remorse, as was the knight for the loss of his good grey-hound. At these words the emperor eagerly requested to hear the story; but the stubborn philosopher refused to relate one word until he should have obtained a day's respite for the prince, which being reluctantly granted, he proceeded with his narrative.

THE KNIGHT AND HIS GREY-HOUND.

Sire, there was formerly celebrated in this city, on the day of the Holy Trinity, a magnificent tournament; and the lists, which attracted from all quarters a crowd of noble competitors, were erected in a pleasant and spacious meadow at no great distance. In this meadow the knight, whose adventure

I am about to relate, had an old manor-house, surrounded on all sides by a river

Of chambers, and of high hall,
Of old work, for-crased[1] all.

He had also a beautiful wife; an infant child whom he idolized; and a grey-hound whose sagacity and courage were unparalleled. The child was attended by three nurses, the first of whom was employed to suckle him, whilst the other two were ordered to relieve each other in watching him, whether sleeping or waking, with constant assiduity.

On the occasion of this tournament,

The knight was lopen[2] on his steed,
And armed well in iron weed;[3]
The shield about his neck, the spear in his hond,
And burdised[4] with the knightes of the lond.

The lady took her place among the beauties who were invited to behold the feats of arms; and as the manor-house was so near as to afford a tolerable view of the amusement, all the servants, and even the three nurses, were eager to gratify their curiosity, and the child was left in its cradle, close to the wall of the house, which, as we have seen, was cracked through in many places.

In one of these crevices was lodged a huge adder, which being disturbed by the unusual shouts of the servants, excited by the various exploits at the tournament, put out its head, and at length creeping from its hole, advanced towards the cradle.

The grey-hound seeth the adder red,
Grislich, rough, strong, and qued;[5]
Anon he gan her assail,
And hent[6] her in his mouth sans fail.
The adder so the grey-hound stang,
And he feeled the bite so strang,
Anon he let the adder gon:
Upon the cradle she flew anon,
And was about the child to sting;
And the grey-hound came yern flinging,[7]
And hent the adder in strong gear,[8]
And flapped her all about his ear.

[1] Cracked, crasy. [2] Leapt. [3] Armour. [4] Played or jusied with. [5] Evil. [6] Caught. [7] Quickly bounding. [8] Manner.

Between the adder and the grey-hound,
The cradle turned up so down[1] on ground;
Up so down, in her fighting,
That the child lay dwelling.
The staples it upheld all quert,[2]
That the child was nought y-hurt.
The adder so the grey-hound bot
By the side, God it wot,
He cried, and on the cradle leap,
And bled thereon a well great heap:
And when the smart was all y-gone,
To that adder he sterte anon,
And by the body he her hent,
And all to pieces her to-rent.
The grey-hound would not ceased be,
Tell that adder were torn of three;[3]
And all the place there about
Was well bloody withouten doubt.

The tournament being over, the spectators began to retire, and the nurses hastened to resume their charge; but they beheld the cradle overturned and covered with blood, and the grey-hound bleeding, and whining from the pain of his wounds. Without examining any further, they concluded that the dog was guilty, and rushing out of the house ran to meet their mistress, to whom they impudently protested, that the grey-hound, in a fit of sudden ferocity, had, in spite of all their efforts, torn to pieces the charming infant.

The lady fell into a swoon, and on her recovery adopted at once the false report of her nurses, related it to the knight on his return, and swore, with torrents of tears, that unless he would instantly revenge her by the destruction of his favourite, she would, before his own eyes, put an end to his own existence. The disconsolate father spoke not a word, but rushed into the hall; and whilst the faithful grey-hound feebly crawled to meet him and to lick his hand, clove the animal in two with his sword. He then approached the cradle to behold for the last time his murdered infant, and having turned up the clothes, saw with astonishment and delight the child in perfect health, and just waking from the slumbers which the preceding accident had not interrupted. By the side of the cradle lay the fragments of the serpent, and the whole fable

[1] Upside down. [2] Happily. [3] Into three parts or pieces.

by which he had been deceived was instantly explained. His conscience smote him. He would not stain his sword with the blood of the wretches through whose means he had murdered the deliverer of his child, but he vowed to expiate, by a penance which should only terminate with his life, his own folly in listening to the counsels of a heedless and inconsiderate woman. He rushed into the woods, retired to a distant hermitage, and never more returned to the habitations of men. Such, sire, will be your remorse and repentance, if you blindly determine on the destruction of your amiable son at the instigation of his false and malicious step-mother.

Diocletian, who generally provided himself with opinions by adopting those of the last speaker, now declared his adherence to the sentiments of Bancillas, and totally forgot his compassion for the misfortunes of the old pinnote-tree, in his tenderness for the good knight, whom he resembled in a warm affection for grey-hounds. But at length the night came, and with it came the reproaches of the empress; who taxed him with want of resolution, and with an extreme love of flattery, by which she assured him that he would be betrayed as the boar was by the herdsman. This allusion effectually awakened his curiosity, and she proceeded to tell him the story of

THE BOAR AND THE HERDSMAN.

To the westward of this city is a spacious forest, formerly the abode of a boar, who, from his amazing size and supposed ferocity, was the terror of the whole neighbourhood. In the same forest lived a herdsman who tended a large herd of cattle; but as they usually pastured in the open parts of the wood, he never approached the haunts of this terrible animal. But it happened one day that a part of his herd had strayed to some distance, and it became necessary that he should follow them. In the course of his search he discovered a hawthorn-tree, the fruit of which was then ripe, and seeing great quantities of it on the ground, could not refrain from stopping to fill his pockets. He did so, and was going to depart, when he discovered the boar, who came straight up to the same tree, under which he had for many preceding days found a plentiful repast. The poor herdsman was half dead with fear; but to fly was hopeless, and his only resource was to climb up into the tree, where he hoped to remain undisco-

vered. Unluckily the boar, after devouring the scanty gleanings which had been left under the tree, happened to scent the ample stores contained in the man's pockets, and being disappointed in his attempts to reach the precious magazine, became furious with rage, foamed at the mouth, and whetting his tusks against the roots of the tree, shook it with such violence that the poor herdsman considered his destruction as inevitable. In this extremity he fortunately bethought himself of emptying his pockets; and at the same time gathering all the haws within his reach, showered them down so profusely that the boar was satisfied, and after a plentiful dinner appeared disposed to take his rest. The artful herdsman now lowered himself so far as to reach with his fingers the back of the animal, which he began to scratch with such dexterity that the boar, who was hitherto unaccustomed to such luxury closed his eyes, and abandoned himself to the most delicious slumbers; at which instant the herdsman drawing a long knife, with which he was provided, suddenly pierced him to the heart. Such, sir emperor, are the artifices of your flatterers; they please and tickle your ears with their praises, but it is that they may lull you to sleep and stab you with more security.

The emperor, not choosing to die like a boar, now determined as usual to put his son to death, but was diverted from his purpose by the wise master Ancilles, who having obtained a day's respite for the prince, proceeded to relate the following story of

HIPPOCRATES AND HIS NEPHEW.

Your majesty knows that Hippocrates, "The Wise Clerk," was formerly professor of medicine in this city. He had with him a nephew whom he wished to instruct in his art, and to whom he communicated all his secrets; but, after a time, the uncommon sagacity of the pupil began to awaken the jealousy and envy of the preceptor, who had meant to form an assistant in his practice, not a rival of his reputation. The irritation of temper produced in the sage by these unworthy sentiments preyed on his health and occasioned a dangerous disease, during the height of which he received a message from the king of Hungary requesting his attendance on the heir of that kingdom, who was now supposed to be on the point of death. Hippocrates, though much against his will, was now

compelled to employ his nephew, though he foresaw that the fame of the young man, if successful, would be elevated very nearly to the level of his own. The young practitioner immediately departed for Hungary,

> And when he come to that lond,
> The king took him by the hond,
> And led him to his sick child;
> "Now Christ of heaven be us mild!"
> The young man seigh[1] the childe's pain,
> And tasted[2] his sinew and his vein;
> He taketh an urinal for to seen;
> He ne segh nought of the king, but of the queen:
> And of the child, God it wote,
> He segh it was a misbegote.[3]
> He gan the levedi aside draw,

and closely questioned her concerning the father of the invalid, who, he was positively certain, was by no means related to the king of Hungary. The queen, astonished at this unexpected question, began by treating it with levity, and when he persisted, threatened him with punishment for his insolence; but on his assuring her that he was unable to cure her child without the disclosure of this important secret, and that she might rest assured of his inviolable fidelity, she looked on him with astonishment, burst into tears, and confessed that a certain earl of Navarre, who had sojourned for some time at her husband's court, and who was very well made and well dressed, had pleased her so much *par gret druerie* she sometimes indulged him with liberties which had apparently led to the birth of her dear child.

The young physician now informed her that the boy, being illegitimate, would require "contrarious drink, contrarious meat;" that he must be fed on "beeves' flesh, and drink the broth," and this diet being plentifully administered to the patient, he rapidly recovered; and the young leech was dismissed with the most magnificent presents, and with the benedictions of the queen and her husband.

Hippocrates, on his nephew's return, inquired into all that passed;

> He asked gif that the child was sound;
> "Yea sire," he said, "by Saint Simound!"

[1] Saw, [2] Felt; taster, tâter, Fr. [3] A bastard.

He asked, "What was his medicine?"
"Beef and broth good a fine."[1]
"What then, was he an avetrol?"[2]
"Thou sayest sooth, sir, by my poll!"[3]
Quath Ypocras, "By the God's doom,
Thou art become all too wise a groom!"
There he thought, against reasoun,
To do him strong treasoun.

The accomplishment of the crime soon followed. One day that they were walking in their garden, and discoursing on the virtues of the plants cultivated in it, Hippocrates pointed out to his nephew a small herb which he desired him to gather, and, whilst the youth stooped for that purpose, drew out a dagger and stabbed him. He then buried the body on the spot, returned into the house, and enjoyed the malignant pleasure of burning the books to which the young man was indebted for his wonderful advancement in science. But the vengeance of Heaven closely pursued him. He was seized with a *meneson* (dysentery), a disease in the cure of which his nephew was always particularly successful, and being unable to arrest its progress, soon foresaw that it would prove fatal. He then convoked all his friends, exhibited before them some striking proofs of his art, and, after warning them of the small extent of all human skill, made a full disclosure of the crime to which he justly fell a sacrifice. His death was attended by excruciating pains, which were heightened by remorse, and he expired vainly calling on his murdered nephew for assistance and relief.

Diocletian was much affected by this tragical story; but the empress was prepared to counteract the impression which it had left by relating the tale of

THE FATHER MURDERED BY HIS SON.

Octavian, emperor of Rome, surpassed in wealth the richest of his predecessors. It was he who built the celebrated tower called the Crescent, in which he locked up his treasures, and appointed for the protection of his hoard a minister whose vigilance and avarice were equally proverbial. He had also another minister, who was a perfect contrast to the former, being remarkable for his profusion; so that having dissipated his whole fortune, he found himself without re-

[1] In perfection. [2] Avoitrel, diminutive of avoistre, a bastard.—O. Fr. [3] Head.

source, and at last formed the desperate resolution of robbing the imperial treasury. To execute such a design without assistance was nearly impossible, and to impart it to a common accomplice was too hazardous; he therefore chose his own son: and, knowing where the money was deposited, repaired by night to the tower, made a breach in the wall, entered, and carried off as much gold as they were able to transport to his habitation. With this supply he was enabled for some time longer to pursue his former course of extravagance; but having at length exhausted his coffers, he determined to attempt the repetition of an enterprise in which he had been once successful. The crafty treasurer, however, had not slumbered over his charge. A few hours only had elapsed after the first robbery, before he perceived that part of the treasure had been purloined, and discovered the part of the wall through which the thieves had entered, and which on their departure they had again repaired so carefully as to leave no marks of injury which could attract the attention of a common observer. Judging from this circumstance that they would probably return, he caused a pit to be dug immediately under the place, and filled it with pitch and birdlime, in the hopes of entrapping the robber, who, in fact, found himself instantly entangled so effectually as to preclude all hopes of deliverance. In this terrible situation he called to his son, warned him to avoid the danger; explained to him the impossibility of his escape, and the fatal consequences which must result to his whole family from the discovery of his guilt; and finally conjured him to strike off his head, as there remained no other means of escaping detection. The young man hesitated for some time, but the dawn approached; the father importunately persisted in the same request: the hope of preserving himself and his relations from a danger otherwise inevitable at length prevailed, and having cut off the head he precipitately ran off with it towards his habitation.

Ac he ne wist, for none need,
Where he might it best i-hede:[1]
But, als he came by a gong,[2]
Amid the pit he it flung;
And went home, and made wo,
His brethren and his sistren also.

In the mean time the treasurer, who never failed to visit

[1] Hide. [2] A jakes.—Halliwell's Dict.

his trap, was not less surprised than mortified at finding in it a headless trunk, from which it was impossible to draw any indication of the guilty person. He, however, had recourse to an expedient which did honour to his sagacity. He gave orders that the body should be slowly drawn by the feet through all the streets of Rome; that its conductors should be constantly on the watch; and that if this ceremony should excite in any house near which they passed an appearance of unusual sorrow, they should seize and bring before him the occupiers of it, who would probably be the near relations of the deceased. The stratagem was on the point of succeeding, and the daughters of the dead man were betrayed by the sight of his body into a sudden burst of lamentation, which attracted the attention of the officers; but the brother at the same moment drawing his sword, pierced himself in the thigh, and exhibiting his wound, convinced them that this accident had occasioned the screams which had awakened their suspicions. From this tale the empress inferred that, as the young man had thrown his father's head into a gong, instead of burying it with proper respect, the wicked Florentin would gladly treat his majesty with similar contempt; and this inference, though perhaps not strictly legitimate, having satisfied Diocletian, he rose with the determination of ordering his son's execution, from which he was again diverted by the philosopher Lentilion, who related to him the story of

THE HUSBAND OUT OF DOORS.

There lived formerly in this town a burgess, who, being disposed to marry, was too proud to accept an alliance with any of his neighbours, and proposed to select for his wife some young lady who might ennoble his blood, and, by her beauty and accomplishments, excite the envy of all his acquaintance. Such a mate he had, at length, the good fortune to discover; and brought home a young damsel of high birth, some beauty, much affectation, and more effrontery. The haughty bride, though she entertained a thorough contempt for her husband, was in some measure reconciled to her new situation by the company of her former lover, who condescended to consider the house of the hospitable burgess as his own, and, without the name of a husband, to perform all a husband's duties.

There was at this time a law in Rome that any person, of

whatever rank or sex, who should be found out of the house after the sound of curfew, should be confined in prison till the morning, and then publicly driven through the streets as a vagrant. This law suggested to the husband a project for correcting the libertine disposition of his wife. Having perceived that she was in the habit of stealing away from his side when he was plunged in his first sleep, and reasonably supposing that she did not pass the time of her absence in total solitude,

O[1] night he him as drunk made,
And yede[2] to bed blithe and glad,
And lay still as he slept soon:
She stale away mididon,[3]
And went to her loteby;[4]
And he it aparceived[5] sikerly,[6]
And went him out, and segh and heard
Altogether how she mis-fared.
And went him in out of the street,
And shut the door swithe sket,[7]
And spake out at window,
And said, "Dame, God give thee how;[8]
This thou ne might forsake for none need;
Ich have i-nome[9] thee in this dede
With thy lechour: with him thou go!
Of thee ne keep I never mo."

The humbled wife now expressed the most sincere penitence; prayed to be admitted into the house; urged the public shame which both must incur if she were found in the streets at that hour; and, at length, counterfeiting the extremity of despair, threatened to drown herself in the well as the only means of preserving her reputation. She then took up a large stone, threw it violently into the water, uttered a dreadful scream, and then silently retreated behind the door. The husband made no reply to her exclamations but that, whether she chose to hang or drown herself was to him a matter of extreme indifference; but he was startled by the dashing of the water, and by the subsequent silence. He continued to listen at the window, repeatedly addressed his wife, but received no answer. He then repented of his severity, rushed down stairs, and running to the well, was not a little surprised at hearing

[1] One. [2] Went. [3] Quickly; immediately. [4] Companion, lover.—Chaucer. [5] Perceived. [6] Clearly. [7] Immediately. [8] Care. [9] Taken.

the door shut behind him with considerable noise, and at being assailed by a torrent of invectives from the window which he had just quitted. It was now his turn to petition. The sound of the curfew struck upon his ear; he heard the horses of the guards; he implored for admittance, but the wife was deaf to his intreaties. Even the guards, who knew the innocent character of the man, interceded for him in vain.

She answered as malicious—
"He cometh now from the hore-house;
Thus he is woned me to serve,
An evil death mot he sterve:[1]
Ich have y-hid his shame ere this;
I ne will never more y-wis."
Corfour[2] bell no longer rong;
The burgess was led forth with wrong.
What helpeth it longer tale?
That night he sat well sore akale,[3]
And his wife lay warm a bed,
And solace of her leman fredde.[4]
A morrow the burgess was forth i-sette,
And his honden beforn him knet;[5]
And through the town he was y-lad,[6]
Lothlich driven, and begrad[7]
As a thief. This mischance
Guiltless he suffered, and this penance.

"Sire, couth[8] this woman of guile?"
"Ya, she was a traitour vile,
And well worse than a hound!"
"Sire, mo swich[9] there beth y-found,
And thyself hath one swich!"

The emperor is unable to controvert the remarks of Lentilion; but at night once more changes his mind on hearing from the empress the story "of a King of Apulia and of his Steward." This is too gross, and much too dull for insertion; but it produces the usual effect on Diocletian, which is afterwards removed by the wise master Malquedras, who relates the story of

THE OLD WISE MAN AND HIS WIFE.

There was formerly in this city an old man who, throughout

[1] Die. [2] Curfew. [3] Grievously cool. [4] Felt. Sax. fredan, sentire.
[5] Tied. [6] Led. [7] Abused, A. S. [8] Knew. [9] Such.

his whole life, had been cited as an example of prudence. He had amassed an ample fortune, which he expended in rational amusements; and having successively lost two wives whom he had married in the prime of life, thought a state of widowhood the best suited to his declining age and growing infirmities. But his friends thought otherwise; and a prudent man is often obliged, for the sake of tranquillity, to follow the advice of his friends in preference to his own wishes. They recommended to him a young and beautiful girl, who had been educated with the greatest care by an attentive mother, and who therefore seemed very unlikely to excite in him that jealous uneasiness to which husbands of a certain age are supposed to be very generally addicted. He married, and found in marriage as much happiness as he expected.

But it was otherwise with the young lady. As neither her mother nor her confessor had thought it necessary, before her marriage, to explain to her very minutely the change of situation which she was about to undergo, she had naturally trusted to her own imagination for a picture of futurity; and this picture of conjugal delight was so far from resembling what she experienced, that she had some difficulty in concealing, even from her husband, the excess of her disappointment. After revolving this matter for some time in her thoughts, she concluded that her husband did not love her; and that, as she felt no great disposition to love him, she could not do better than to search for a third person, who might more nearly sympathize with her feelings. With this notable resolution she was so well satisfied that she hastened to impart it to her mother, whom she found at church, and to whom she communicated a long string of domestic anecdotes, concluding with

"Ich mote have some other love."
"Nay, daughter, for God above!
Old men ben fell[1] and queint,[2]
And wicked wrenches[3] can ateinte:[4]
Misdo nought, daughter, but do by rede."[5]

The old lady then proposed the following expedient as a trial of the old man's disposition. "Your husband," said she, "has in his garden a favourite tree which he rarely fails to visit. Take advantage of his first absence from home;

[1] Cruel. [2] Cunning. [3] Stratagems.—Sax.
[4] Give a colouring to, A.N. [5] Advice.

the door shut behind him with considerable noise, and at being assailed by a torrent of invectives from the window which he had just quitted. It was now his turn to petition. The sound of the curfew struck upon his ear; he heard the horses of the guards; he implored for admittance, but the wife was deaf to his intreaties. Even the guards, who knew the innocent character of the man, interceded for him in vain.

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had thoughts of bestowing her love on some young priest, who would of course be careful to keep her secret. The mother was now more at ease, and enjoined her to make one more trial, which, she assured her, would infallibly procure her happiness by putting an end to the present apathy of her husband. "Your lord," said she, "has invited all his friends to an entertainment which is to take place in a few days. You must, on that occasion, hang a bunch of keys at your girdle, and having taken your seat at the upper end of the table, contrive to entangle these keys in the table-cloth. Then, upon some trifling pretext, rise suddenly; by which means the cups and dishes will be overset, and the whole company thrown into confusion." All this was punctually executed by the obedient daughter; who, after "serving the guests with bread and ale," took her seat by her husband, and soon after sprang up from table with such dexterous awkwardness, that the whole hall was instantly overspread with the ruins of the entertainment. This was her last triumph.

On the following morning she was much surprised at beholding in her apartment a large fire, a great chair covered with cloth, a table supporting a number of basins, and a *good barber*, who, with an air of medical importance, was expecting her arrival. Her husband, addressing her with his usual mildness, observed that she had in her veins a quantity of peccant blood which it would be necessary to remove, and assured her that after the operation she would immediately regain the natural gentleness of her disposition. She trembled, turned pale, declared that she could not bear the sight of blood, protested that bleeding would kill her on the spot, struggled, screamed, but to no purpose: the inflexible barber forcibly placed her in the chair, bared her right arm, opened the vein, applauded his own dexterity, took away two porringers of blood, and, having tied up the wound, proceeded to repeat the operation on the other arm. Fresh screams, expostulations, and struggles on the part of the lady were unable to disturb the tranquil obstinacy of the barber. A third measure of blood was drawn off: the patient became faint and giddy; and being put to bed, began to believe that her last hour was now really approaching. Her husband, indeed, had encouraged her to hope that she might yet do well; but as he had at the same time informed her that the next transgression would compel him to double the discipline, she sent in the

utmost haste for her mother, to whom she faintly cried out that her lord had killed her—

"For mine three unwrest[1] deed,
Three dishful of blood he let me bleed,
That I ne may live, by Godis ore!"[2]
"Daughter listeth thee love more?"
"Nay, mother; by God all might,
I nill neither love clerk ne knight."
"No, daughter! I said full well,
That old men beth queynt and fell.
They con more qued[3] bythenche[4]
Than thou canst do with any wrenche:
Hold thee to thine husbound,
And thou shalt have all the mound!"[5]

To this story the artful empress opposed that of

CRESSUS THE RICH MAN.

Sir, your majesty has doubtless heard of Virgil, the famous enchanter. He placed, by his skill in necromancy, in the midst of the Forum, a fire which it was impossible to extinguish, and at which the poor of Rome were accustomed to warm themselves and to cook their dinners. On a pedestal, near the fire, stood a brazen statue, with a cross-bow bent, and a quarrel or large arrow on the string; and on the forehead of the statue was an inscription purporting,

"Gif me smiteth any man,
I schete[6] him anon ogan."

A certain Lombard, taking offence at this inscription, asked permission of the Romans to strike the statue, and they having encouraged him to try the adventure, the figure punished their folly by shooting his quarrel into the midst of the fire, which from that moment disappeared. Thus was lost one of Virgil's benefactions to this city; but he had enriched it with other marvels, the destruction of which is the immediate object of my story.

On the eastern gate of the city he placed a figure of brass, having in his hand a golden ball: on the western gate stood another man of brass exactly similar, except that he was empty-handed; and in the centre of Rome, on the [illegible] elevated stage, was fixed a third statue, holding in it [illegible]

[1] Base; wicked. [2] Grace. [3] Evil, mischief.
[5] All the world; i.e. all your wishes shall be gra[illegible]

enchanted mirror, which reflected an exact picture of all that was passing in Italy within seven days' journey of the city. Whenever any of the neighbouring potentates prepared to attack the Romans, the two first-mentioned statues began to play at ball, the one throwing it and the other catching it; and this excited the attention of the citizens, who, on inspecting the magical mirror, immediately saw the quarter from which they were menaced, and were thus enabled to anticipate the designs of their enemies.

The King of Apulia, aware of these obstacles to his project of attacking the city, consulted all the cunning men whom he could find, and at length found two *clerks* in Rome itself, who, on his promise of an immense reward, undertook to contrive the destruction of the statues. They obtained from the king two *forcers* (chests) filled with gold, which they secretly conveyed into Rome, and buried at night under the two statues at the gates. On the following day they repaired to the palace, and addressing the emperor, informed him that there was a vast treasure concealed under ground within the walls, which they would undertake to discover upon his assurance that they should receive half the profits; but that they must first go to sleep, because it was only in a dream that they expected to learn the exact spot where the gold was hidden. The emperor acceded to the conditions, and on the next day the elder brother pointed out the statue near the eastern gate, where, on digging, the forcer was found, and conveyed in great state to the imperial treasury. The younger brother was a no less able dreamer; and the emperor having made an excavation under the statue at the western gate, was rewarded by a second chest of gold still richer than the first. Cressus was now full of confidence in his dreamers, whom he exhorted to persevere; but when they promised him an exhaustless mine of wealth by digging under the statue with the mirror, his avarice was combated by his fears, and he refused to permit the operation till they assured him that all Virgil's treasures were concealed there, and that they could so prop up the ground that all might be removed without danger to the statue. But having completed their excavation, and promised the emperor for the morrow the completion of his utmost expectations, they stole out in the night, kindled a fire under the wooden supports of their mine, and, having witnessed the success of their contrivance, made their escape into Apulia. The populace of Rome

rushed in crowds to the palace, seized the emperor, bound on a table, and having melted a quantity of gold, poured to his mouth, eyes, and ears,

And said, " Sire, for Godde's love,
Thou hast made thrall that was above;
Now art thou full, now make thee hait[1];
Now wilt thou never more coveit[2]!"

he foregoing tale, it is true, does not possess much intrinsic :t, but it was about an emperor who was duped by cunning ; its catastrophe was dreadful, and it frightened Diocletian ost out of its wits; so that it required all the talents of the ned astrologer Caton to restore him to his senses, which he ted by telling him the story of

THE MAGPIE.

Now everich man that loveth his hale,
Listen wel Catoun's tale.

A burgess was in Rome town,
A rich man, of great renoun;
Marchaunt he was, of great aveir[3],
And had a wife was queint[4] and fair;
But she was fickle under her lok,
And had a part of Eve's smock:
And many ben yet of her kin,
That ben all be-lapped therin.

The burgess had a pie in his hall,
That couth tellen tales all
Apertlich[5] in French language;
And heng in a fair cage,
And seeth lemmans comen and gon,
And telleth her loverd soon anon;
And, for that the pie had y-said,
The wife was oft evil apaid[6].
And the burgess loved his pie,
For he wist he couth nought lie.

So it befell upon a day,
The burgess from home took his way,
And went about his marchandise:
The wife watched anon her prise,

[1] Happy; joyful. O. Fr. [2] Covet; desire. [3] Possessions.
[4] Neat. [5] Openly, plainly. [6] Pleased.

And sent her copenere[1] for;
And when he com to the hall door,
He ne durst nought in hie,
For the wreying[2] of the pie.
The wife him by the honde hent,
And into chamber anon they went.

The pie began to grede[3] anon,—
"Ya, now my loverd is out y-gone,
Thou comest hither for no good;
I shall thee wraie, by the rood!"
The wife thought y-schent she was;
A wrenche[4] she thought nathelas[5];
And cleped a maid to make her bed,
And after, by her bother rede[6],
A ladder they set the hall to,
And undid a tile or two;
Over the pie they gan handle
A clear[7] basin, and a candle;
A pot full of water clear
They shed upon the pie's swere[8].
With basen beating, and candle light,
They bobbed the pie by night,
And water on him gan schenche[9];
This was one of woman's wrenche.

Tho the day drawen gan,
Away stale the young man.
Men unlock door and window;
The pie her shook with mochel how[10],
For she was fain that it was day:
The copener was went his way;—
The good burgess was home y-come;
Into the hall the way he nome.
The pie said, "By God Almight!
The copener was here to-night,
And hath y-done thee mochel shame;
And made an hore of our dame!
And yet it hath been, to night,
Great rain, and thunder bright;

[1] Lover. Sax. [2] Discovering, betraying. [3] Cry. [4] Stratag
[5] Nevertheless. [6] By their joint advice.
[7] Polished, so as to reflect the light. [8] Neck.
[9] The same as skenke, to pour out. Sax. [10] Care

Sithen ich was brid in my nest,
I ne had never so evil rest."

The wife hath the tale y-heard,
And thoughte well to been amered;[1]
And saide, "Sire, thou hast outrage
To 'lieve a pie in a cage:
To night was the weather clear,
And the firmament well fair;
And she saith it hath been thonder;
She hath i-lowe[2] many a wonder;
But ich be awreke of her swithe,
Ne shall I never ben woman blithe!"

The good man asked his neighbours
Of that night, and of the hours;
And they said, that all that night
Was the weather clear and bright.
The burgeis said, "The pie
Ne shold him never more lie;"
Na more wordes he there spake,
But, all so swithe, his neck to-brake.

And when he saw his pie dead,
For sorrow couth he no rede:
He saw her bodi and her cage,
He thoughte of[3] guile and outrage.
He went him out, the ladder he segth,[4]
And up to the hall roof he stegth,[5]
The pot with the water he found;
(That he brake with his hond;)
And many other trecherie
That was i-don to his pie.
He went him down, withouten oth,
In his heart grim and wroth;
And with a good staff, full aket,
His wife oute door he bet;
And bade her go, that ilke day,
An alder-twenty-devil way![6]

"Lo, Sire," he said, "for a fool's rede,
The pie, that said sooth, was dead;

[1] Examined, proved innocent; *amerian*. Sax. [2] Lied. [3] Suspected.
[4] Seeth. [5] Mounteth. Sax. stigan.
[6] Literally, on the way of all the twenty devils.

Had he taken good conseil,
His pie had been whole and hale:
And also fareth thine emprice,
Thorough her reason, shrewd and nice,[1]
She goeth about, day and night,
Thy son to death for to dight."

To this tale the empress opposed that of

HEROWDES AND MERLIN.

Herowdes, emperor of Rome, had in his council seven sages, to whom, while he followed his amusements, he intrusted the whole management of the empire; and these sages employed the power thus confided to them as a means of gratifying their avarice. Though their authority did not enable them to levy a tax on his subjects, they derived from the credulity of the Romans a considerable revenue; having enacted, that whoever should wish to have an intrepretation of his dream must bring them a besaunt[2] as a reward: and as the Romans were great dreamers, the contribution was nearly equal to the whole imperial revenue. But the emperor was punished by heaven for his culpable deference to his ministers. One day, that he was preparing to go out on a hunting-party, and was passing under one of the gates of the city, he was suddenly struck blind. The wise men were immediately summoned, and, being interrogated why the emperor could not see, confessed that they were unprepared with an answer, and requested a fortnight's delay, during which time they meant to consult their books, and hoped to discover the cause and the means of remedying this unexpected calamity. But their books were consulted to no purpose; the emperor, who whilst he had his sight never thought fit to use it, was very impatient for its recovery, and the sages were almost in despair, when an old man advised them to consult the celebrated Merlin, the child who was born without the intervention of a father.

Two of the wise masters, being deputed by the rest, brought this wonderful child[3] to Rome, and introduced him to Herowdes, to whom he related that, at some depth in the earth,

[1] Wicked and foolish. [2] A coin of gold, formerly used at Byzantium, valued by Joinville at ten sous; and consequently worth rather more than as many livres of the present day.

[3] The mode in which Merlin was discovered is exactly copied from his romance, and therefore omitted in this abstract.

but directly under his majesty's bed, was a great cauldron, boiling with seven large bubbles, and that so long as the said cauldron should continue to boil, and the bubbles remain unbroken, he never would recover his sight. The emperor, a good deal surprised at this intelligence, employed his miners to search for the cauldron, which was readily found; and which, without any apparent excitement, continued to boil, and to exhibit exactly seven great bubbles. He then begged to know how this ebullition could be arrested; but Merlin replied, that this important secret could only be disclosed to his imperial ears, and that his most confidential ministers must leave the room. This being complied with, Merlin proceeded to state that the wickedness of the wise men, who caused themselves to be paid a besaunt for every dream which they interpreted for his subjects, had provoked the indignation of Heaven, and that his majesty had therefore been visited by this severe misfortune, for the termination of which nothing more would be necessary than to strike off the heads of his seven ministers. Herowdes, rejoiced to find that his cure could be so cheaply obtained, caused his first minister to be beheaded, and had the satisfaction to hear that the corresponding bubble had disappeared: the other executions then followed in succession with a similar effect, and Herowdes became as clear-sighted as before his accident.

To remove the impression left by this tale on the mind of Diocletian was the object of the sixth master, whose name is not mentioned, but who proceeded to tell the story of

THE WIDOW WHO WAS COMFORTED.

There was a knight in this country, "a riche sherreve" (count), who married a young and beautiful wife, the object of his tenderest affection. Such was the happiness of this young couple, that the day and night appeared too short for their endearments, and each moment of accidental separation was considered by both as a serious misfortune. One day, whilst they were examining together a new knife, which had been bestowed on the lady as a bridal present, it slipped from the hands of her husband and slightly wounded her. The accident was followed by no bad consequence; but the unhappy knight was seized with such horror at the sight of her blood that he suddenly died.

He did great folie, certé,
Or too tender was his heart.

Unluckily grief is not, in all constitutions, a mortal disease; and the lovely cause of his death found herself unable to shake off, with the same expedition, the burthen of existence. Yet she trusted that she should not long survive him; and, unwilling to tear herself from his remains, ordered a small lodge to be built in the church-yard over the intended place of his grave, and took possession of this sad habitation on the day of his interment. Her friends vainly interposed,

And saiden, "Dame, gent and free,
Of thy self have pité;
For thou art fair and young sans fail,
And may'st the world mochel avail:
Some knight thou wed of noblay,
And have with him much to play;
Good children beget and fair:
Gentil dame débonaire,
Let away thy mourning,
And take thee to some comforting!"
"That will I do for no weal;
Ac die I will on his buriale!"

As they perceived that the torrent of her grief only swelled the more by indiscreet opposition, they now satisfied themselves with providing, in silence, every accommodation that could be afforded in the hovel which she thought fit to occupy; and particularly took the precaution of making an excellent fire, to secure her from the baneful effects of the damp, and left a supply of fuel sufficient to last till the next morning.

It happened that on this very day three thieves who had been condemned to death were executed within a short distance of the church-yard.

The three thieves weren knights,
That were i-honged anon-rights;
For they had the countré anoyed,
And with robbery destroyed,
Anhonged they were all three.
A knight of the countré held his fee,
For to loke[1] the three knightes
Upon the gallows three nightes.

[1] Watch.

He com to the gallows, armed wele,
Both in iron and in steel,
For to make, the first night, ward.
The weather was cold and froward;
He was for-cold, and looked about,
And was ware, withouten doubt,
Of the fire in the church-hawe,[1]
And thither-ward he gan to draw,
For to have some warming;
And found the levedi doel[2] making,
And bade[3] she should let him in.
She said she n'old,[4] by Saint Johain.
"A! yes," he said, "leve[5] dame,
I n'ill thee do harm ne shame."
He swore as he was gentil knight;
She let him in anonright.
He sat and warmed him by the fer;
He beheld the lady's cheer,
And segh swich semblant she made;
And said, "Dame, thou art agade,[6]
That thou moanest for the dead,
That may thee do nother good ne quad![7]
Comfort thyself, pluck up thine heart;
Such mourning then will thee smart.
Of this mourning thou hast unright;
Thou shouldest love some gentil knight
That to thee might do some solas;"
And she said, "Allas! allas!"——

At this time the knight began to reflect that, during his absence, the dead bodies committed to his charge might possibly be purloined; he therefore mounted his horse and rode to the gallows. But he arrived too late, for one of them was already carried off. It was vain to lament his own effeminacy, which had induced him to desert his post in search of a good fire, or to imprecate curses on the desperate hardihood of those who had profited by his negligence. The mischief was done; and his own invention suggested no means of repairing it. But he had some confidence in the resources of female cunning; and having returned to the lodge, and communicated his distress to the beautiful mourner, was

[1] The church-yard. [2] Sorrow. [3] Prayed.
[4] Ne would; would not. [5] Dear. [6] Distracted. [7] Evil.

completely encouraged by the unexpected confidence of her reply.

She said, "Sir, ich will help thee,
So that thou wilt spouse me."
"Yes, dame," he said, "preciouse!
Gif thou me help, I will thee spouse."
She let her sorrow away gon,
And said, "Help, leman, anon;
Help delve up my lord that was,
He shall us helpen in this cas;
And hong we him in his entaile!"[1]
Her rede was done sans faille:
It ne may nought ben for-hole,[2]
They bare him forth for him was stole.
Then said the knight to the levedi,
"Who may this knight hongi?[3]
I thee say, by heaven king,
I n'old him honge for no thing;
For gif ich had i-honged a knight,
I shold be coward y-cleped with right."
"Sir," she said, "Ich will, full faw,[4]
High him hongen and up-drawe!"
The levedi did, in wode gear,[5]
A rope about her lordis swere,
And drew him up, and hung him fast:
The knight of her deeds was aghast,
And said, "Dame, by God mound,[6]
The stolen knight had a wound
In his heved, that was be-knoe[7]
Whereby him knew high and low;
And but thy loverd swich one have,
I thee say, so God me save,
Soon, within a little while,
Worth[8] i-parceived our guile."
"Sir," she said, "take thy swerd,
And in the heved smite my loverd;
Then shall it ben none understonding,
But it was he that there ere hing."[9]
"Nay, dame, for moche ne for lite,[10]
The dead knight would I nought smite!"

[1] Place; stead. [2] Concealed. [3] Hang. [4] Glad. [5] In furious manner. [6] God's world. [7] Known. [8] Will be. [9] Hung. [10] Little.

"No, Sire?" she said, "thy swerd me reach,
And ich him shall, with my hond, teach
How Godis grame[1] came to town,
Right amidelward[2] his crown."
The lady took and smote with main
All amidelward the brain:
Then the knight well understood
That false and fickle was her blood;
And said, "Yet unlike he beth;
Broken were his fore teeth."
"Sir," she said, "smite hem out."
"Nay, dame," he said, "withouten doubt."
"Then will ich," she said; and took a stone,
And smote hem out everich one.
When this deed was i-do,
The levedi said the knight to,
"Sire, now ich have won thy love!"
"Nay, dame," he said, "by God above,
For gold ne silver, lond ne house,
Thy false bodi ne would I spouse;
For all so wouldest thou serve me,
As thou hast done thy loverd so free:
Thou hast i-taught me a new ran,[3]
That I shall never lieve woman;
For, tho they make semblant fairest,
They will beguile you alderformest!"[4]

To this tale the empress opposed a story no less dull than absurd. Rome, it seems, was once besieged by seven Saracen kings, and the emperor was advised to confide its defence to seven wise men; one of whom, by name Genus (Janus), devised a stratagem for the purpose of frightening away the enemy. He caused to be made a black garment, covered with black squirrel-tails, and a vizor with two faces, the most frightful that could be imagined,[5] above which he adjusted a mirror, intended to reflect the sun's rays. In this fanciful dress he mounted to the top of one of the towers; gesticulated with great violence, screamed as loudly as he could; and, dazzling the eyes of the enemy with his mirror, impressed upon them the opinion that he was either an angel of light,

[1] Anger. [2] In the midst. [3] Saying. [4] First of all, A. S.
[5] Here ends the Auchinleck MS.; the remainder is from the Cotton MS., where it occupies about 1,250 lines.

or a devil of very high rank; so that, both characters being considered as equally invincible, the Saracens raised the siege, ran off, and during their flight were slaughtered in great numbers by the Christians. The Roman citizens rewarded the ingenuity of Genus by placing him on the imperial throne, after deposing their former emperor. The empress, as usual, threatens Diocletian with similar degradation; the foolish monarch again orders the prince's execution, and again recalls his order at the intercession of the seventh wise master, named Maxentius, who prophesies that, on the following day, Florentin will recover his speech, and fully exculpate himself; and in the mean time entertains his majesty with the tale of

THE TWO DREAMS.

There was formerly a knight in Hungary distinguished by his prowess, but still more distinguished by his talents and ingenuity, in which he equalled and even surpassed the most learned clerks of his time. One night he beheld in a dream a lady of astonishing beauty, of whom he became suddenly enamoured; and when he waked in the morning he found it impossible to erase the impression made by the charms of this visionary mistress. Her height, her air, her complexion, the colour of her hair, and even the form and proportion of all her features were so exactly painted on his memory, that he felt sure of recognising her as easily as an old acquaintance; and, having nothing better to do, departed without loss of time on this singular quest, in which he flattered himself with the hopes of success, although he had no clue to direct him, and was no less ignorant of the country which contained his lady than of her name and condition. At the same point of time the lady had a similar dream, and became no less violently enamoured of the knight; but, not being equally at liberty to wander about the world, could only deplore the misfortune of being tormented by desires which she could not reasonably hope to gratify.

During three long months the traveller proceeded in his search without any consolation but the consciousness that his adventure was strictly conformable to the practice of chivalry; but having at length reached the sea-side, he perceived a spacious castle, which seemed to be the residence of some opulent and powerful baron. Its walls on one side were washed by the sea, which there formed a commodious haven

filled with shipping, and the only gate on the land-side was guarded by a strong and lofty tower.

This tower contained the long-sought object of the knight's affection. She was wife to the castellan, who ardently loved her, and whose jealousy was equal to his love. He kept her from all intercourse with mankind in a rich and spacious apartment, the windows of which were secured by strong bars of steel, and at one of these windows was the lady enjoying the prospect when our knight made his appearance. The earl her husband was sitting immediately below her in a small court or garden, and was fortunately much occupied by a game at chess, at which he was engaged with one of his vassals.

The knight, attracted by the appearance of a female figure, rode towards the window; and on a near approach had the pleasure to recognise the well-known features of the lady of the dream.

He looked up into the tower,
And merrily sang he of amour;
And when she heard him so begin,
Unnethes might that lady blyn,
That she ne had called him her unto;
But, for her lord, she durst noght so.

The features of her lover were concealed by his helmet, but his general air and appearance were sufficient to make him known; and though she had no means of explaining to him her situation, she had the satisfaction of seeing that his sagacity had instantly discovered the cause of her embarrassment. Instantly ceasing to address her, he advanced towards the earl, dismounted from his horse, and kneeling before him said, "Sir earl, I am a knight of a far country; I am driven from my possessions in consequence of having killed in a duel a knight whose family was more powerful than my own; I know, from the appearance of your territory which I have traversed, that you also are hardly beset by your enemies, and I come to offer you a sword which perhaps may prove fortunate in your service." The earl willingly accepted his proposals, and in a few days had the satisfaction of seeing his enemies completely defeated by the enterprising adventurer, whose prowess in the field appeared to be irresistible, and who discovered, as if by intuition, all the projects of his opponents, while his own were perfectly impenetrable. In a short

time the whole country was cleared of invaders, and the castle, so lately filled with alarm and confusion by the crowds who had retired to it as a place of refuge, exhibited the tranquil formality of a peaceful court. All were delighted with the victorious stranger; and the earl, who could now hunt his dogs and fly his falcons without being frightened, set no bounds to his gratitude.

As the tower which contained his wife was accessible only by a single door, the key of which never quitted his pocket, and as he was perfectly ignorant of the passion which, through the agency of a vision, had united the souls of the two lovers while their bodies were separated by an interval of a few hundreds of leagues, the good man did not think it necessary to watch over or to interfere with the amusements of his deliverer, who generally passed his evenings in a solitary ride, and always contrived in returning to pass as near as possible to the window of his mistress.

A letter soon she cast him till,
Whereby he might wite all her will.
The knight took up the parchemyne,[1]
And red the French full fair and fine,
And, als soon as he red it had,
Was he never in heart so glad.

Nothing now remained but to obtain an interview with the lady, which however was a matter of no small difficulty. Fortunately the knight was not apt to be stopped by difficulties; and as these had been long since foreseen, he had already matured the project by which he hoped to overcome them.

He began by requesting the earl to bestow on him a piece of the waste ground beyond the tower, for the purpose of building a habitation; and as this request proved his intention of prolonging his stay, besides which it was thought that such an outwork to the castle, constructed under his direction, could not but add considerably to the strength of the place, it was joyfully granted. The building advanced with rapidity; its turrets rose into the air; and subterraneous galleries, ap-

[1] Letters were usually written on parchment, and either fastened with a pin or sewed. Ladies were generally able to write, though few knights could read; but parchment was so scarce that to procure a piece for a love-letter was often very difficult. The word *French* (in the next line) is used for language in general.

parently intended for the secure reception of magazines and for the confinement of prisoners, extended in every direction to a considerable distance. One of these advanced under the tower; and when the work was in this state, the knight sent for an architect of eminence from a neighbouring city, to whom he imparted his secret, and who, under his own eye, made a communication with the floor of that building, so artfully concealed that no eye could discover it. The success of his project was now secure; but the foreign artist was in possession of the secret, and his fidelity might possibly be corrupted.

The knight quit[1] well the service
Of the mason for his quayntise;[2]
He slew him soon, that ilke day,
For fear that he should ought say.

After this murder, which, because the sufferer was an inferior, is related without any marks of reprobation, he gaily repaired to the interview with his mistress, in whose embraces he received the reward of his past, and formed the project of new, acts of treachery.

At parting, the lady put on his finger a gold ring, with which he hastened home, and soon after repaired to the great hall, where he joined his sovereign and the court at table. The earl, who always delighted in his conversation, was on this occasion more pleased than ever with the unusual gaiety of his favourite, till he discovered on the knight's finger the ring with which he had some reason to be well acquainted. He had presented it to his wife as a memorial of his affection: it was the work of an eminent artist, and had been formed under his own particular directions. He thought it impossible that two such rings should exist in the world; he mused in silence, and, finding himself unable to explain a mystery of such consequence to his peace of mind, rose abruptly from table and proceeded towards his wife's apartment in the tower. But the crafty knight, who had carefully noted the progress of the suspicions which he had intentionally excited, hastened to the lady by his "privy way," restored the ring, and again disappeared after a moment's conference. The earl entered soon after, accosted his wife with great affection, examined her fingers one after another, and after some hesitation requested her to show him the ring which he had given

[1] Acquitted. [2] Cunning.

her as a memorial of his tenderness. The lady told him that it was very safe; rallied him on his endless suspicions; complained of her long and strict imprisonment; and for a time trifled with his impatience by the most extravagant professions of fondness: but finding that her assurances produced no effect, and being unwilling to excite his jealousy too far, she at length drew out her purse, and with a careless air put the trinket into his hands. The evidence was too strong for his doubts. The similarity of the two rings was indeed astonishing; but that which he held in his hands was certainly no illusion, whereas it was possible that his eyes might have deceived him respecting that which he had beheld on the knight's finger. He was now fully satisfied, solicited the forgiveness of his wife, who was much amused by his penitence, and staid with her till the dawn of day summoned him to his morning devotions.

After hearing mass, he sent for the knight, and proposed to him a hunting party in the neighbouring forest; but the favourite excused himself. "I have just received," said he, "from my own country the most agreeable tidings. My peace is made with the family of the knight whom I slew in single combat, and my mistress, whom I have long and passionately loved, has kindly condescended to be the bearer of the good news. If my lord would be pleased to dine with me at his return from the field, my happiness and hers would be complete." The earl, after promising to attend him, departed for the chase, and the knight prepared to accomplish the remainder of his project.

Having first conveyed his mistress from her tower to his own apartment, he fully instructed her in the part which he desired her to act, and then, taking off her usual dress, assisted her in putting on a rich Hungarian habit, with a head-dress so charged with ornaments as to alter very considerably her whole appearance. Thus accoutred she expected the earl's arrival, received him most courteously, placed him by her side at table, and directed her whole discourse to him. She had so effectually disguised her voice, and the topics on which she spoke were so artfully chosen, that for a time he felt no suspicion: but on surveying her features in succession, and on meeting her eyes, which she never turned from him, he could not help thinking that this Hungarian stranger bore a singular resemblance to his own wife; and though much ashamed

of his uneasiness, he could not view without emotion the tenderness which she manifested for another. He recollected the adventure of the ring; he considered the strength of the tower, the key of which was safe in his pocket, and his reason was satisfied; but his heart was still uneasy. He inquired into the name and character of the beautiful stranger, and heard from the knight a story so plausible as almost to overcome all his uneasiness; but he was particularly rejoiced to hear, both from the knight and from the lady, that it was their intention to return almost immediately to Hungary. The dinner at length was finished, and the earl mechanically repaired to his wife's apartment for the purpose of calming his agitated spirits.

In the mean time, a few minutes being sufficient to rid the lady of her Hungarian ornaments, and to invest her in her usual dress, she was replaced by her lover in the tower, and had full time to compose herself before the arrival of her husband. Never in his life had he beheld her with so much pleasure as on the present occasion. He gazed at her with an attention which she well knew how to interpret, though she kindly appeared to impute it to his affection, and after a long scrutiny convinced himself that her resemblance to the Hungarian beauty was most perfect; but that their features, though apparently cast in the same mould, were animated by a very different expression, and that the humble and submissive air of his gentle countess was far more pleasing than the assured and confident demeanour of his friend's mistress. By degrees every trace of his former doubts and jealousy was completely obliterated; he gave way to his fondness, which was returned with much seeming sincerity; and, after passing the night in the tower, rose in the morning full of confidence in the fidelity of a wife whom he was on the point of losing for ever.

No sooner had he quitted her to go to morning prayers than the knight again conducted her to his own house, and again dressed her in the habit of the preceding day. A ship had been long ready for him in the harbour, and had received on board, during the night, the whole of his effects. The lady therefore being properly disguised, he hastened to church, and, when mass was over, accosting the earl, requested that he would kindly assist at the ceremony of his marriage to his leman, to whom he wished to be solemnly united before h

departure, which, the wind being now fair, he was unwilling to delay. The earl readily consented, and dispatched two officers to the knight's house to conduct the lady to church, whilst he conversed with his friend on the state of the country, and on the measures which would be requisite to insure its future prosperity. The marriage ceremony was performed with due solemnity, the earl acting as sponsor; after which they marched in procession to the sea-side, where the unsuspecting husband, taking his wife by the hand, assisted her in climbing the side of the vessel, and, when on board, publicly presented her to the knight as his bride, and recommended her to his love and protection. He then took his leave and returned to the city; the anchor was weighed, the sails filled, and a brisk and favourable gale speedily carried the lovers to their place of destination, leaving the husband to lament at leisure their treachery and his disappointment.

Maxentius ended this tale, as he had begun it, with the assurance that Florentin would on the following day recover his speech; the intelligence was instantly conveyed throughout the whole city; and Diocletian, who loved a prophecy almost as much as a story, participated in a still higher degree than any of his subjects in the general curiosity. The empress, had she been provided with any number of additional tales, would have found it no longer practicable to excite his attention. He rose at the dawn of day, and, after hearing mass, proceeded to the council-chamber attended by his peers, by the Seven Wise Masters, and by a crowd of burgesses. Shortly after, his son was brought up, decently dressed, but pale, weak, and emaciated; and, after saluting his father with due respect, addressed him to this effect: "Your wife, sir, is a very wicked woman, and moreover a sorceress. She cast a spell, on my arrival at your court, in virtue of which, had I opened my lips before the expiration of seven days, I should have instantly died, and my excellent preceptors would have been sacrificed to her malice. All this I fortunately found recorded in the moon and stars. Had I not taken the precautions which have now saved my life, you would have treated me as a father in this neighbourhood once treated his son who was predestined to surpass him in wealth and power." "Dear son!" replied the emperor, "thy words delight me. Each of thy preceptors has told me a story in thy behalf, and I now find that thou also art provided with one of these agree-

able narratives, which I shall doubtless admire beyond the best of theirs. I therefore charge thee, as thou valuest my blessing, to relate it." The prince bowed, and immediately began the story of

THE RAVENS.

At a sea-port to the westward of this city lived, some time since, a merchant who by numerous voyages had acquired a princely fortune, and who, preserving a taste for his early profession, frequently amused himself during the summer by sailing from island to island. He had an only son, to whom he had given an excellent education; and the young man, though only fifteen years old, had so far penetrated into the most difficult secrets of nature as to have acquired the languages of birds. One day, while the father and son were sailing in a new and favourite vessel, a pair of ravens continued for some time to flutter over their heads, occasionally settling on the masts or in the shrouds, and croaking so incessantly that the old merchant was much disturbed and almost deafened by their noise. "I wish," cried he, "since I cannot silence those vile birds, that I could at least discover the subject of their discourse!" "That," replied the son, "is addressed to me; they have been telling my fortune, and they assure me that I shall one day be much richer and more powerful than thou art, and that a time will come when thou shalt be happy to support the sleeve of my cloak whilst I am washing; and that my mother will be proud of holding the towel to wipe my hands." "Indeed!" exclaimed the father. "Art thou so discontented and ambitious? But I will soon try whether the croakers are not mistaken in their prophecy!" With these words he suddenly caught the youth round the waist, and threw him headlong into the sea; after which he altered his course, and, still boiling with indignation, sailed back to port.

The youth was fortunately an expert swimmer, and, seeing an island at some distance, exerted himself so effectually that by the blessing of Providence he at length reached the shore. But the island was uninhabited, and, during four days which he passed on it, he was unable to procure a morsel of food; yet he had the consolation of receiving assurances, from different sorts of birds who frequented the island, that his trial would be short, and that Providence would ultimately reward

him for his sufferings. On the fifth day he discovered a fisherman in his boat, and had the good fortune to attract his attention. He now partook of the poor man's provisions; but his entertainer, having no means of supporting him in future, had no sooner conveyed him to land than he sold him to a certain lord who was steward to the king of the country.

This monarch, with whose name and dominions we are unacquainted, was at that time tormented by a very singular misfortune. Three ravens thought fit to become his constant companions. Whilst he was in the field pursuing his amusements, they fluttered over his head, and croaked so loudly and incessantly that the poor king was almost stunned by their shrieks. If he retired to his palace, they established themselves near his window, and continued to distract him. It was in vain that he changed his lodging from room to room, or from palace to palace; his quick-sighted and winged adversaries were always at hand. Their lungs were indefatigable, and their bodies appeared to be invulnerable.

> The king in no place might have peace,
> For of their noise would they nought cease,
> Nowther for bow ne for sling;
> No man might them away bring.

Vast rewards had been offered for their destruction; the king was even willing to bestow the hand of his only daughter, with half of his kingdom as a dower, on the person who could release him from his importunate and clamorous companions. At length he determined to convoke a solemn parliament of all his nobles and wise men. If he could obtain no relief from his torment, it would be some alleviation to talk about it.

During this time the merchant's son was become the favourite slave of the king's steward, and, having heard the reasons for summoning the convention, obtained permission to accompany his master for the purpose of beholding the solemnity. The monarch made a long and eloquent speech, described very pathetically the discomfort of hearing at every moment of the day three hoarse voices which were perfectly unintelligible, and concluded by offering the hand of his daughter and a participation of the sovereignty to him who could relieve him from his distress. But his counsellors were silent. The archives of that country did not afford a single case in point, and it appeared that no ravens, since the esta-

blishment of the monarchy, had hitherto attempted to molest the tranquillity of the throne.

The youth now assured his master, in a whisper, that he was able to unravel this mystery, and was ready to do so on receiving from the king a solemn assurance that the reward should not be withheld; and the steward having announced this proposal, the king bound himself by oath, before the assembly, to perform the conditions. "Sir," said the youth, "the two ravens who sit together and appear to be engaged in constant dispute, are two males; and the subject of their altercation is that old female, who sits apart and is generally silent, though she sometimes takes her share with considerable acrimony. The elder of the two disputants was originally her mate; but during a year when corn was extremely scarce, he considered her maintenance as too troublesome, and abandoned her. She would probably have perished, but for the attentions of the younger raven, who fed her during the time of famine, and has continued to prove to her his tender attachment. The old raven has since become once more enamoured of her charms, such as they are, and insists upon renewing his former engagement; but neither his old mistress nor his young rival will consent to his claim. Hence their incessant clamour. They have, however, agreed that the matter shall be decided by your majesty, whose wisdom and equity are well known to them, and who, they are confident, will bestow on this very intricate dispute all the attention which it merits. When you shall have pronounced sentence, they will immediately quit your court and retire into the forest."

The king, rejoiced at the prospect of recovering his tranquillity, and willing to merit the good opinion of the ravens, referred the cause to his parliament, where it was discussed with due solemnity; after which, being satisfied with their sentence, he stood up and published his award, "that the old raven should forego all future claim to his first mate, for whom he had shown himself deficient in affection by quitting her in the year of famine, and that she should become the lawful mate of the young petitioner, whose love and constancy were highly laudable." Scarcely had he pronounced these words, when the old raven, uttering a furious scream, flew off with great velocity, and the happy couple, after expressing as well as they could their gratitude to their royal judge, departed in an opposite direction.

the midst of an avi

The happiness of this c
yet he could not help feel
more his mother, who had
and even the father who ha
sea. Whilst he was devisin
informed him that, being rec
remaining amongst the witne
had lately sought an obscu
was now under his governmen
two serjeants with orders t
announce to them that the pri
their arrival, and intended to
day. The astonished couple
their power for the reception o
the table was prepared, prese
the husband supporting with
long sleeve of his cloak, while
Thus was fulfilled the original
the son immediately recalled to
old merchant, who thought hims
turned pale and trembled; but
his parents, ordered them to be
and during the remainder of th
them with unceasing duty and af

Florentin, having

Thus was the lady's ending day,
And thus was she quit her journée[1].
The child lived with great honour,
And after his father was emperour,
And led his life with workes wise,
And ended seyn[2] in Goddes service.
Thus-gate[3] endeth all this thing.
Jesu grant us his blessing!

FLORICE AND BLAUNCHEFLOUR.

This romance is usually supposed to be of Spanish origin. The earliest edition of it noticed in Percel, Bibl. des Rom., is entitled "Flores y Blancaflor," in 4to. en Alcala, 1512; of which a French translation was, not long after, published, with the title, "Histoire amoureuse de Flores et de Blanchefleur, traduite de l'Espagnol par Jacques Vincent," in 8vo., Paris, 1554, and Lyons, 1571. This was the ground-work of the elegant compendium published by M. le Comte de Tressan, who, in a short introduction, expresses his belief that the Spanish metrical romance was written about the beginning of the *ninth century*, a supposition too extravagant to require refutation. We may be almost certain that the Spanish poem is nothing more than a translation or imitation of a French metrical romance, composed probably in the thirteenth century, and rendered into English in the early part of the fourteenth; a copy of the latter being still extant in the Auchinleck MS.[4] It is in a very imperfect state, consisting of 850 lines only, which probably formed little more than half of the entire poem: but as it agrees very exactly with M. de Tressan's abridgment, I have made use of that work[5] for the purpose of completing the story.

During the time that the Emperors of the West continued to hold their court at Rome, one of them had a nephew named Prince Perse, presumptive heir to his throne, and already possessed of large domains in Italy, whom his conduct had so much endeared to his subjects, that they unanimously wished to see his virtues transmitted to a new generation, and eagerly promoted his union with the beautiful Topase, daughter of the

[1] Day's work, enterprise. [2] Since. [3] In this way.

[4] Another copy is preserved at Cambridge, printed with some incorrectness in Hartshorne's Metrical Tales, 1829.

[5] It is proper to apprise the reader, that in borrowing my materials from M. de Tressan I have been far from wishing to imitate the graces of his style, which would have very ill accorded with the remainder of the narrative.

duke of Ferrara, and niece to the duke of Milan, at whose court she had been carefully educated. Topase had herself some pretensions to the imperial throne, so that the noble families on both sides were well disposed, from political considerations, to promote the match; and the young persons, having been seized at their first meeting with an irresistible passion for each other, the marriage was shortly concluded, and they received the nuptial benediction from the hands of the Pope, together with a profusion of indulgences, consecrated rosaries and relics.

Nothing could exceed the delight of this charming couple during the first three weeks that followed the celebration of their nuptials. But Prince Perse was of a warm and impetuous disposition; the fair Topase was no less so; and scarcely were the usual festivities attendant on such a union at an end, when they both became so impatient for the birth of a child, that the day was scarcely long enough for their devotions, their alms, their visits to the seven churches of Rome, and the propitiatory ceremonies by which they attempted to procure the intercession of the most popular saints and most efficacious relics in Rome: yet neither saints nor relics thought fit to produce the pregnancy of Topase.

The bride and bridegroom were almost in despair, when a pious Spaniard observed to them that they had neglected to request the assistance of one saint, whose credit in heaven was so great that he had never yet met with a refusal. This was St. James. Prince Perse, resolved to repair his neglect, made a solemn vow, that, if the great object of his wishes could be accomplished, he would instantly undertake, together with his wife, a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostella. This fatal compact with the saint produced its effect. On the following night an angel appeared in a dream to Perse and to Topase; informed them that their wishes would be gratified; but at the same time obscurely foretold a sad series of calamities which menaced them in consequence of their impatience in desiring to anticipate the designs of Providence. Both were much startled by this terrible vision: but at their age disagreeable impressions are soon effaced; and as the apostle faithfully kept his promise, they proceeded to fulfil their engagement, took leave of the emperor, and without any attendants set off for Galicia.

At this time the kings of Galicia and of Portugal, both of

whom were Christians, and tributary to the Saracen king of Murcia, had entered into a league to shake off the Mahometan yoke; and at the very moment when our pilgrims entered Galicia, the Saracen prince, whose name was Felix, incensed at this insolence of his vassals, had sent his troops against the allies with orders to lay waste the country, to destroy all the male inhabitants, and to carry into captivity the women and children.

Prince Perse and his charming Topase, unconcious of the danger which awaited them, faint with heat, and fatigued by their long journey, were reposing themselves at the entrance of a forest, when the Saracen troops rushed upon them, and instantly murdered the unhappy prince in the arms of his wife, who, on waking, found herself covered with his blood. The officer who commanded the division, astonished at the beauty and majestic appearance of the fair pilgrim, conveyed her immediately to Felix, who, compassionating her youth and distress, ordered one of his principal officers to conduct her to his queen, to whom he related in a letter the calamity which had befallen her, at the same time requesting that the lovely captive might receive every alleviation of her misery which the compassionate kindness of a royal mistress could bestow.

The queen of Murcia was of the same age, and nearly as beautiful as Topase: she therefore readily sympathized in the sorrows of so young a mourner, and treated her with such attentive kindness as shortly obtained her entire confidence, and drew from her a disclosure of her real name and rank, and of the motives which had produced her fatal pilgrimage to Galicia. From this moment the names of mistress and slave were abolished between them; they became inseparable friends; they slept in the same chamber; and the queen, who was also pregnant, assured her dear Topase that their children should be educated together under her own eyes, and be taught from the beginning to cherish those sentiments of affection for each other which united the hearts of their parents.

The two princesses were delivered on the same day, which was that of Palm-Sunday. The Christian subjects of Felix were indulged in the liberty of celebrating publicly their principal festivals, so that palm-leaves interwoven with garlands of flowers were exhibited in all the streets, and even

within the walls of the palace; and the young queen, in allusion to the day, which she considered as the festival of flowers, directed that her infant son should take the name of Florice, and that the daughter of her friend Topase should bear that of Blanchefleur.

But scarcely had this unfortunate mother brought her daughter into the world, when the image of her murdered husband, recurring in all its horrors to her imagination, entirely overcame the powers of life already weakened by sickness and misery. The queen, in hopes of consoling and reviving her, caused the two children to be brought to her; but the fainting Topase, at the sight of her infant, whose features painfully recalled to her those of its father, began to shed tears *in such abundance that they nearly filled a saucer which was accidentally placed beside her.* Then stretching out her arms to the child, she exclaimed, "O my daughter! sole remnant of my former happiness, receive from thy mother the only present which it is in her power to bestow! May these tears serve as the water of thy baptism, and bestow on thee the blessed character of christianity!" With these words she poured on the head of the infant the contents of the saucer, pronouncing at the same time the words of the sacred ceremony; conjured the queen, as a last favour, that she would permit the child to be instructed in the principles of the holy religion to which she had just devoted it; and, having applied her lips to the hand of her friend and benefactress, uttered a faint scream, raised her eyes to heaven, and expired.

Blanchefleur, of course, was unconscious of the loss of her parent. Educated, together with Florice, under the eyes of the queen, and treated by her with the utmost tenderness, she naturally considered his mother as her own, and loved him with the affection of a sister, She acquired with facility all the accomplishments which were suitable to her sex; while he, by an uncommon address in all his exercises, announced the future prowess of a perfect knight, and early displayed the gallantry and tenderness of that character by his anxiety to obtain the applause, and to secure the affections, of his charming foster-sister.

Mohady, a famous mollah, well-instructed in the tenets of the Mahometan religion, and zealous for its success, was chosen as the preceptor of the young prince, and was much scan-

dalised at finding that the image of Blanchefleur was for ever standing in the way of the ideas which he was solicitous to inculcate. Florice, though full of respect for the faith of his parents, could not be persuaded that the religion of Blanchefleur was absurd; and was still less disposed to believe that the houris of Mahomet's paradise could be either more beautiful or more amiable than the charming girl whom he had loved from his cradle. Mohady stormed, and complained to the queen, who laughed at his remonstrances: but Felix was more tractable; and the zealous mollah succeeded in convincing him that it would be expedient to remove Florice from his female companion, and to send him to the court of his uncle, the king of Algarva, who resided at Montorio, for the completion of his studies.

The young prince was almost in despair when he heard that he was under the necessity of submitting to this dreadful banishment. But his father represented to him that his superior rank demanded from him superior excellence; and that the stern laws of chivalry imperiously required from the candidate for its honours that he should have been disciplined to hardships, and early removed from the indulgence of the paternal roof. "Go, fair son," said he; "go in quest of glory; go, that thy name may be renowned;" the queen added, "and that thou mayest deserve and obtain thy mistress!" The last exhortation determined Florice, who was of opinion that the lover of Blanchefleur ought to be peerless in valour and in courtesy; so that he consented to depart for Montorio: but though the preparations for his journey were already made, he could not consent to go till he had taken leave of the charming Blanchefleur, and convinced her of the regret with which he tore himself from her. She expressed, with the most winning simplicity, her affection and her sorrow; and drawing from her finger a ring containing a small talisman, "Florice," said she, "accept this as a pledge of our mutual love; look on it every day; if thou seest its brilliancy tarnished, it is a sign that my life or my liberty is in danger. But obey the orders of thy father; I doubt not thy constancy nor thy readiness to assist me when it shall be necessary." The approach of Felix prevented any further conversation.

The arrival of the young prince was celebrated at Montorio by the most splendid festivals and tournaments, from which however he received no satisfaction. He had submitted to

banish himself from all that rendered life agreeable, but habit could not reconcile him to exile. His only amusement was to cultivate a small garden, in which he had disposed borders of white flowers, so as to trace out the initials of his mistress's name; here at day-break he used to chant some couplets which he had composed in her honour;[1] and here he was one day surprised by Mohady, at a moment when, in his anxiety to obtain the hand of Blanchefleur, he breathed a prayer to the God of the Christians as his most powerful intercessor.

Mohady became furious. He instantly dispatched, by a confidential messenger, a letter to Felix, in which he stated the necessity of separating Blanchefleur for ever from her lover, whose zeal for the Mahometan faith was on the point of yielding to his affection for that dangerous beauty. A second letter, addressed to Ajoub, principal Iman of the great mosque, related all the circumstances which had passed, and urged that priest, as he valued the interests of religion, to contrive by some means or other, the destruction of Blanchefleur.

Felix, proud of his descent from Omar, and a bigot from education, was well disposed to comply with the request of Mohady, but was unable to devise a pretext for his conduct, when Ajoub furnished him with it. Blanchefleur was in the habit of raising poultry, with which she sometimes supplied the royal table; and the wicked Ajoub, having bribed a servant to convey some poison into the body of a chicken which she had sent to the king, accused her of an intention to destroy her former protector, and supported the charge so powerfully by his influence with the judges, that the innocent victim of his malice was unanimously condemned to suffer death, unless she should find, before the day of execution, a knight who should venture to assert her innocence.

Whilst this was passing in the court of the king of Murcia, an event took place at Montorio, which awakened Florice from the apathy and indifference into which the absence of his mistress had plunged him. Two Moorish knights, who had signalised themselves by a serises of adventures in Africa, arrived in the country of Algarva, and dispatched a herald to

[1] The verses which M. de Tressan has put into the mouth of Florice are very elegant, and have been with equal elegance translated by the late Mr. Way. They are to be found in the second volume of his Fabliaux, p. 265.

the court of the king, reproaching him with having degenerated from the valour of the original Arabs, and defying his best knights to a trial of their prowess. The challenge was accepted; two knights were deputed to chastise the insolence of these strangers, but they failed to return; two more were sent: but, as they also disappeared, the warriors of Montorio became less anxious to encounter the unknown champions, and on the third day the herald repeated his message without exciting much impatience in his hearers. But Florice was now present, and addressing himself to the herald, "Return," said he, "to thy masters, and say, that the courtesy and gallantry which reign in this court are the best pledges for the courage and honour of its knights. Say too that I am prepared to attack thy two champions, and to punish their audacity."

The prince now threw himself at the feet of his uncle, requesting the honour of being immediately knighted, that he might encounter these Arabs of the Desert, and prove to them that he was no unworthy descendant of the illustrious Kaled. The king joyfully performed the ceremony, dressed him in his own armour, and put into his hands the victorious sword of Kaled, which he had carefully preserved in his treasury. A superb Moorish courser was then presented to him: he vaulted into the saddle, and shortly arrived at the tents of his antagonists.

The two knights, though little skilled in courtesy, had however too much honour to unite in attacking a single adversary, and presented themselves in succession. The first assailant broke his lance against the shield of Florice, and was himself thrown to the ground. The second resisted the shock, and was not overcome till after a long and obstinate conflict; but the youth and activity of Florice at length prevailed; and the generosity with which he used his victory having gained the esteem and admiration of both his enemies, they willingly proceeded with him to liberate their prisoners, and promised to confess before all the ladies of Montorio, that the courtesy inspired by their charms tends to exalt and improve all the virtues of chivalry.

At the moment when Florice was enjoying his victory, the whole glory of which he secretly attributed to his lovely mistress, and was stooping to kiss the talisman, which he had received as the pledge of her affection, he beheld with horror

and surprise its blackened and opaque surface, which appeared to exhibit an appearance of smoke, with occasional flashes of flame. He shuddered, turned pale, uttered an exclamation of horror, burst from the arms of his new friends, rushed to his horse, sprung into the saddle, and disappeared in an instant.

Having proceeded, without stopping, during the whole of that day and of the following night, he arrived at day-break at the capital of Murcia, and, concealing himself behind a turret till the gates were opened, entered the city unperceived. Already a string of carts loaded with wood began to move through the streets, preceded by troops, and by executioners carrying torches. In the rear of the procession was a waggon bearing a female covered with a black veil and loaded with chains; a cadi bearing a long scroll marched behind; and a second troop of armed men closed the march. Florice, again surveying his talisman, perceived it to be more clouded than ever. He lowered the vizor of his helmet, rode up to the waggon, and with a faltering voice exclaimed, "Who are you?" "Ah!" replied the female, "I call to witness my God and my Redeemer that Blanchefleur is not guilty!" The voice pierced his soul. Drawing his sword, and threatening with instant death the first man who should disobey his commands, he ordered the escort to stop; and having questioned the cadi, and learnt from him the atrocious calumny preferred against his mistress, he exclaimed, "Traitor Ajoub! be it my task to confound and punish thee, and to succour unprotected innocence! Go, cadi, say to Felix that an unknown knight demands surety in his court, and presents himself to defend Blanchefleur, and to fight her accusers."

The laws of chivalry imposed upon Felix the necessity of ordering the combat; he therefore sent for Ajoub, and communicated to him the defiance. Ajoub was neither of an age nor of a profession suited to a champion; but he had a son, not less ferocious than himself, whose giant size and strength had already raised him to a considerable command in the armies of Felix, and who readily undertook to support his father's quarrel, The lists were soon prepared. The son of Ajoub threw down his gauntlet, and repeated aloud the accusation against Blanchefleur, whilst Florice exclaimed, "Traitor, thou liest in thy throat! behold me ready to maintain my assertion." A fire was immediately kindled at the

extremity of the lists; two waggons, in one of which was placed Ajoub and in the other Blanchefleur, stood together on the outside of the barriers, and the whole space was surrounded by a numerous guard of soldiers.

The two champions advanced from the opposite extremities, conducted by their sponsors. That of Florice was a young knight named Selim, who had recognised the prince under his disguise, and had demanded permission to attend him. The judge of the tournament then gave the signal; and the combatants, having shattered their lances, drew their swords, and began the mortal conflict. Florice, with great coolness, parried the blows of his adversary, and patiently waited for the most favourable moment of making his attack; but his horse, having received a wound in the neck, became ungovernable, and bore him, in spite of his efforts, to the very edge of the lists where stood the waggons. Blanchefleur, drawing aside her veil, cried out, "Ah, Florice! why art not thou here to assist me?" whilst the son of Ajoub, redoubling his blows, anticipated an easy victory. But the scene was quickly changed. The prince determined to relieve the alarms of his mistress, exerted his whole powers: every stroke of his sword was followed by torrents of blood; his arm seemed to move with the rapidity of lightning, and his adversary was already covered with wounds; when Florice, putting up a short prayer to the God of the Christians, aimed a terrible blow at the unwieldy son of Ajoub, which separated his head from his body. The father at the same moment springing from the hands of his guards, rushed towards the prince, who, with another blow, sent his head to accompany that of his son. A thousand voices at once proclaimed the innocence of Blanchefleur, who was borne in triumph to the queen, at the same time that a young slave of Ajoub, throwing himself at the feet of Felix, confessed that he had prepared by his master's orders the poisoned chicken; upon which the body of the atrocious Iman was immediately consigned to the flames.

The triumph of innocence was now complete; but Florice, aware of the dangers which might attend a longer stay in his father's capital, having kissed the hands of the king and queen as well as of Blanchefleur, expressed by signs his gratitude to the faithful Selim, and setting spurs to his horse, immediately quitted the city and plunged into the forest. Selim then explained to Blanchefleur, who scarcely dared to

hope that her lover had been her deliverer, the reasons which had necessitated his immediate departure, and promised to go and join his master, for the purpose of concerting with him the most probable means of securing their future correspondence.

Florice returned with as much speed as possible to Montorio, where he found his uncle not a little alarmed by his absence. His bloody armour and wounded horse exhibited proofs of his having found an opportunity of signalizing his valour; but as he persisted in refusing to relate his adventure, his uncle abstained from harassing him with useless inquiries, and satisfied himself with expressing the most unfeigned joy at his return.

But the constant anxiety which preyed upon the mind of Florice soon affected his health, and produced a dangerous fever. Spain at that time possessed the best physicians in Europe; and the sultan of Algarva having procured for his nephew the assistance of the celebrated Averroés, who resided at the court of Cordova, that able man, after relieving the worst symptoms of the complaint, succeeded in discovering, and related to the sultan, the real cause of the disease. The sultan, anxious for the recovery of his nephew, immediately wrote to the king of Murcia a most pressing letter, in which he conjured him to send to his court the beautiful Blanchefleur; but this kind measure produced an effect the most opposite to his intentions. Felix, far less anxious for the happiness or even for the health than for the religious tenets of his son, determined to follow without loss of time the advice of Mohady; and, for the purpose of insuring the final separation of Florice and Blanchefleur, ordered the unfortunate girl to be seized and carried off to the port of Carthagena, where she was sold as a slave to some Greek merchants, who were then ready to set sail for Alexandria. The merchants, rejoiced at obtaining such a prey, instantly embarked with her, and, the wind being fair, soon landed with her in Egypt.

The queen of Murcia, justly indignant at the insult offered to herself, in seizing as a prisoner any one so immediately under her protection, but much more incensed at the cruelty of her husband to the two persons who were most dear to her, overwhelmed Felix with reproaches. But it was too late; and the crime was accomplished. Selim flew to acquaint Florice with his misfortune; and the prince, who was already informed

ring of some impending mischief, instantly took horse, astening home, was mysteriously introduced by Selim queen's aparment.

ever unwilling to risk a long separation from her son, der mother could not disapprove of his departure in of Blanchefleur. She therefore embraced him, gave r blessing,[1] and drawing a ring from her finger, "Have ef son," said she "this ring. Whilst thou preservest her fire shall burn, nor water drown, nor weapon injure d all thy wants shall be instantly supplied." Florice, gratefully accepted the ring, took a tender leave of his , and before daybreak set off with Selim for Cartha-

ugh disguised as merchants, the young prince and his rlain travelled with considerable magnificence; and, rrived at the port, took up their lodging in one of the al houses in the city, where they were served with leference and respect, and occupied the principal seats e.

All that therein were
All they maden glad cheer;
And ate and drunk each one with other:
Ac Florice thought all another.
Eat ne drink ne might he nought,
On Blanchefleur was all his thought.

air of grandeur which distinguished him, and the melancholy of his demeanour, soon attracted the eyes wakened the curiosity of his hostess, who began by ing to her husband that the elegant stranger was cer- no merchant; and, finding her remark disregarded, sed her discourse to Florice himself:

"Child, full of mourning I thee see;
Thus sat herein, this enderdai,[2]
Blancheflour, that fair may;
Herein was that maiden bought,
And over the sea she was y-brought—
To Babiloyne they will her bring,
And sell her to Kaiser other to king;
Thou art alike her of all thing,
Of semblant, and of mourning;
But thou art a man, and she is a maid:"
Thus the wife to Florice said.

[1] Here begins the metrical fragment. [2] Other day.

Tho Florice heard his leman neven,
So blithe he was of that steven,[2]
That his heart became all light.
A cup of gold he let fill right;
"Dame," he said, "this haill[3] is thine,
Both the gold and the wine;
Both the gold and the wine eke,
For thou of my leman speak:
On her I thought, for her I fight,
And, wist I where her find I might,
Tho should no weather me assoine,[4]
That I ne shal her seek at Babiloine."

The travellers passed only one night at Carthagena, and, embarking next morning with a favourable wind, shortly arrived in Africa, where the prince, "on reaching the land where his leman resided, thought himself in Paradise." He could not, at first, discover any traces of his mistress; but he was told that the amiral of Babylon had proclaimed a magnificent festival, and he thought it certain that at such a festival he must discover, or receive intelligence about, the peerless Blanchefleur.

On his way to Babylon he reached another fair city, where the host and hostess were no less courteous than those of Carthagena, and again acquired the certainty that his pursuit was properly directed. Here, too, whilst he sat at a repast which his grief of mind prevented him from tasting,

Then spoke the loverd of that inn.
"Thus sat, this other day, herein,
That faire maid Blancheflour.
Both in hall, and eke in bower,
Ever she mad mourning cheer,
And bemente[5] Florice her lief sire.
Joy ne bliss ne had she none,
Ac on Florice was all her moan."
Florice het[6] a cup of silver white,
And a mantle of scarlett
Y-panned all with menivere,[7]
And gave his hostess there.
"Have this," he said, "to thine honour,
And thou it might thank Blancheflour."

[1] Named. [2] Sound. [3] Health. [4] Prevent, excuse.—Fr. [5] Bemoaned. [6] Took. [7] Lined with menivir, (menu vair, Fr.) or gray fur.

He then proceeded to question his host and hostess, and was told that his mistress had certainly been purchased by the amiral of Babylon, that he paid for her three shekels full of gold, and that all who had witnessed her incomparable beauty were persuaded that she was destined to be his queen.

Florice, after passing a sleepless night, determined before his departure to ask the advice of his kind host concerning the most practicable means of obtaining an introduction to Blanchefleur; but the good man had already told all that he knew, and could only advise him to consult a friend of his, who dwelt by the side of a bridge on the road to Babylon, and at a short distance from that city. At the same time, he drew from his finger a ring, which, he said, would serve as an introduction to his friend: and the prince, having thankfully accepted the ring, and rewarded his host with a magnificent present, proceeded on his journey.

The burgess to whom he was addressed, and whose hospitable mansion was pointed out by the bridge, was named Dayre. He was a man of great wealth and politeness, and having beheld the ring which the prince brought with him as a token, entertained him sumptuously, and offered his best assistance to relieve him from the anguish which seemed to prey upon his spirits. Florice, thus encouraged, revealed to him the secret of his birth, informed him of his passion for Blanchefleur, related to him her unfortunate history, and ended by conjuring him to suggest the means of obtaining an interview with her. Dayre, who with some reason considered the young man's project as the suggestion of madness, endeavoured to dissuade him from the enterprise by laying before him a picture of the amiral's power and wealth. "My son," said he, "thou seekest thine own destruction. The amiral is the suzerain of at least fifty kings, all as powerful as thy royal father; yet should they all, with their united forces, attempt to gratify thy wishes, they would be unable to wrest thy mistress from his hands. Babylon itself is a populous kingdom inclosed in a city. It is sixty miles in circuit; it contains twenty castles, so vast that each is equal to a market-town; the walls are also protected by a hundred towers, any one of which would resist all the forces of a mighty monarch:

"And though all the men that beth y-born,
Hadden it upon their death y-sworn,
That should win thy may so soon
As from the heaven high the sun and moon!

"The tower," continued he, "in which the women are confined, is a thousand toises in length by a hundred in breadth; its materials are the purest marble, and a mortar so hard that no steel can cut it:

"And the pomel[1] above the lead,
Is y-wrought with so much rede,[2]
That men no firen o'night burn,
Neither torch ne lanterne.
Such a pomel was never bigonne,[3]
It shineth o'night so o'day doth the sun.

"The women's apartments, four-and-twenty in number, are guarded by eunuchs, whom no bribe can tempt from the faithful discharge of their duty. Indeed, were they negligent of their charge, it would be impossible that their crime should escape detection, as the morals of these ladies are protected, as you shall hear, by powerful enchantments. You must know that the sultan selects a new wife every year, and the ceremonies observed on the occasion are as follows:

"Then shall men fetch down off the stage,[4]
All the maidens of parage,[5]
And bring hem into a orchard,
The fairest of all middelard.[6]
About the orchard goeth a wall,
The worst stone is chrystal.
There men may seien, on the stone,
Mochel of this world's wisdom.
And a well there springeth in,
That is wrought with mochel gin.
The well is of mochel price;
The stream cometh from Paradise.
The gravel in the ground of precious stone,
And of virtue, y-wis, each one,
Of saphires, and of sardoines,
Of onyxes and calchedoines:
Then is the water of so mochel eye,[7]
Gif there come any maiden that is forlaie,[8]
And bow to the grounde,
For to waschen her honde,
The water will yell as it were wode,
And become on her so red so blood!

[1] Cupola. [2] Craft. [3] Began, undertaken. [4] Story, (étage, Fr.) the floor where the women were lodged. [5] Rank, high birth. Fr. [6] The earth. Sax. [7] Power. [8] Seduced.

Which maiden the water fareth on so,
She shall soon be fordo![1]
And thilke that ben maidens clean,
They may hem washe of the rene;[2]
The water will erne[3] still and clear,
Shall it hem make no dangere.
At the well-heved[4] there stant a tree,
The fairest that may on earth be;
It is y-cleped the tree of love,
For flowers and blossoms beth in above.
And thilke that clean maidens be,
Men shall hem bring under that tree,
And which so falleth on that flower,
She shall be chosen queen with honour.
And gif there any maiden is,
That the amyral halt[5] of most price,
The flower shall on her be went,
Through art and through enchantement.
Thus he cheseth through the flower,
And ever we hearkeneth when it be Blancheflour."

Florice, having foreseen considerable difficulties in the execution of his enterprise, had listened with much anxiety, but without despair, to the greater part of this recital; but at its conclusion he lost all courage, and, fancying that he already saw his mistress in the arms of the detested amiral, sunk lifeless to the ground.

The benevolent Dayre could not behold without pity the symptoms of a passion which he now deemed to be incurable. He therefore, after some deliberation, communicated to his young friend a project which, though extremely hazardous, might possibly, if pursued with skill and caution, produce the gratification of his wishes.

"You must assume," said he, "the disguise of a mason, and, repairing to the tower, appear to examine with the greatest attention its structure and dimensions. The porter, whose character I well know, will immediately accost you, and inquire into your business. He will perhaps treat you with brutality; but you will answer him with the utmost respect, and tell him that you are an architect, and, having orders to construct a similar tower in another country, are

[1] Destroyed. [2] Clear stream. [3] Run. [4] Spring-head. [5] Held.

desirous of viewing a most distinguished model. The man is equally curious and covetous. He will enter into conversation with you for the sake of asking questions, and will soon propose to you to play at chess with him, in hopes of winning your money. You will take with you, in the first instance, only thirty marks, which you will lose to him; and he will then anxiously request you to return and take your revenge. On the following day take with you a larger sum; exhibit, if you think fit, a little more skill, so as to alarm his fears; but suffer him ultimately to gain the whole. On the third day you must overwhelm his avarice by your generosity. Stake large sums, and lose them with carelessness; display, without affectation, the rich golden cup which I have seen in your possession, and to gain which he would readily stake his body and soul. He will press you most eagerly to play for it, and will offer to risk against it whatever he is worth. After raising his anxiety to the utmost, make him an offer of it, declaring to him at the same time, that your wealth enables you to consider such a present as a mere trifle. This will completely dazzle and overpower him; he will devote himself to you as your slave; and you may then put his courage and ingenuity to any trial which you may think proper."

Florice was charmed with this contrivance, and executed it with ability and success. The porter, indeed, was dreadfully alarmed when he first learnt the dangerous service that was expected from him, and repented the rash oath by which he had bound himself to an inconsiderate youth, perfectly careless of his own safety, and indifferent to that of others. But as Florice had informed him of his whole history, he began to reflect that his benefactor was the only son of a powerful monarch, from whom he might expect the possession of unbounded wealth; and that life is often hazarded on much less flattering prospects; he therefore concluded by requesting a delay of three days, during which he promised to devise some expedient for gratifying the prince's wishes.

Blanchefleur and all her companions were passionately fond of flowers, and it was the porter's duty to supply them in profusion. Casting his eyes on the hampers, in which these flowers were usually conveyed, he thought that one of them might without difficulty contain a man; and Florice having tried the experiment, his friend covered him with roses and lilies, and ordered a couple of stout slaves to convey that

namper, together with the rest, into Blanchefleur's apartment. The slaves obeyed; but

They bade God give him evil fin,[1]
That so many flowers did therin,

and growing more and more surly as they struggled under the unexpected load, they stopped at the first apartment, which belonged to a maiden named Clarice, instead of proceeding to that of Blanchefleur; and, having deposited their burthen, again repeated their execrations, and retired.

Clarice was, fortunately, the intimate and confidential friend of Blanchefleur, and still more fortunately, happened to be alone when the hamper arrived. She immediately approached it to inspect the flowers, when Florice, almost suffocated with heat, and breathless with the expectation of seeing his long lost mistress, on hearing the light steps of a single female, suddenly started up in his hamper and prepared to rush into her arms. The sight of a spectre would not have been more astonishing to Clarice. She involuntary uttered a shrill and loud scream, which echoed through the apartments, and presently brought a number of female slaves to her assistance. Florice finding his secret betrayed, though he knew not whether by accident or design, hearing the crowd of females who hurried towards the chamber, and expecting to be dragged to instant execution, stood silent and motionless in his hamper, and resigned himself to a fate which he believed to be inevitable. But Clarice, with admirable presence of mind, making him a sign to crouch down beneath the flowers, instantly remedied the confusion, and with perfect serenity of countenance replied to the questions of her attendants,

"To this coupe[2] ich came, and wold
The flowers handle and behold;
Ac there, or ich it ever wist,
A butterfly to-gain me flist.
Ich was so sore adrad of than,
That shrieken and greden[3] I began."
The maidens hadde therof glee,
And turned again, and let Clarice be.

Having extricated herself from this difficulty, she ran to the apartment of Blanchefleur, and, while her eyes sparkled

[1] End, Fr. [2] Basket. The word *coop* has still in some of our provincial dialects a nearly similar meaning. [3] Cry out, Sax.

with joy, "Come away," said she, "come and see the present I have received from the garden! Such a flower! If you only look on it for a moment, I am sure it will give you infinite pleasure." "Do not mock my grief," replied Blanchefleur, "by talking to me of pleasure! I am assured that the amiral is resolved to make me his wife; but never, no, never shall he take me alive to his arms. Florice, perhaps, may have forgotten me, but never will I forget the sacred promise of preserving my fidelity inviolate!" Clarice listened to her with a mysterious smile, of which she was unable to comprehend the meaning, and, seizing her hand, only said, "Come now and see this curious flower;" and dragged her up to the hamper, from which Florice immediately issued. Blanchefleur, speechless with joy and astonishment, sunk into his arms, and whilst Florice pressed her to his heart in silent rapture,

Clarice beheld all this,
Their countenance, and their bliss,
And laughing said to Blanchefleur,
"Fellow,[1] knowest thou ought this flower?
Little ere, ne wouldest thou it see;
And now, thou ne might it let fro thee!
He must ken well mochel of art,
That thou wouldest give therof any part!"

The lovers now threw themselves at her feet, which they bathed with tears, imploring her not to betray them to the amiral; and the good-natured girl not only promised to keep their secret, but to assist them to the utmost of her power in the further prosecution of their amours. It was impossible to be more inconveniently situated than they were for the purpose of obtaining that nuptial benediction which was necessary to legalize and to consecrate their union, and it was no less impossible, after Clarice had "brought them to a bed wrought with silk and cendale, and drawn the curtains round," that two lovers so long separated by fortune, and so well convinced of each other's constancy, should not consider themselves as husband and wife. They therefore satisfied their own scruples, and those of their good friend Clarice, by the most solemn promise of being publicly married at the first convenient opportunity.

Now had the amiral swich a wone,[2]
That every day there should come

[1] Companion. [2] Custom.

Three maidens out of her bower,
To serven him, up in the tower,
With water, and cloth, and basin,
For to washen his hondes in.
The third should bring comb and mirour,
To serven him with great honour.

s this ceremony was performed by all the ladies in each pair being on duty for two successive days, it ately came to the turn of Clarice and Blanchefleur, on ning after the arrival of Florice. Clarice rose with and hastened to call her friend, who promised to fol- iediately; but having failed to keep her word, the s confidante assured the amiral that the poor girl had e whole night in prayers for his safety and happiness, , for that reason, incapable of attending her duty. use was so well delivered that the amorous monarch fectly satisfied; but as the same story, however , was not likely to succeed a second time, Clarice besought Blanchefleur to be more watchful on the ; day; when finding that after repeating her sum- ore loudly than usual she obtained no answer, she urally concluded that the recollection of her recent ad kept her friend awake, and that she must be rrived at the palace. So strong was this impression ind, that when, upon her appearing before the amiral, ted his former question, she was utterly unprovided answer. Her haughty master, incensed at this mark t on the part of that Blanchefleur who had so lately arying Heaven with prayers for his happiness, in- rdered his chamberlain to repair to her apartment, plore the cause of her absence. The chamberlain his commission, entered her bower, advanced to her ed the curtains, beheld her fast asleep, saw another he same pillow, and returned, almost petrified with nent, to relate the story to his master. The amiral, stonished, seized his sword, and proceeded with his the bed; and "yet was the sleep so fast on their at the happy couple were unconscious of his intru- lorice was so young that his face did not betray his ; the amiral, uncovering his breast, perceived that he an, and, boiling with rage, uttered an exclamation akened the sleeping lovers.

"Say me now, thou, bel ami,
Who made thee so hardi,
For to come into my tower
To ligge there by Blaunchefloure?
To wrother-hale[1] were ye bore,[2]
Ye shollen tholie[3] death therefore!"

Neither of the lovers were able, in this first moment of surprise and horror, to give any answer to his questions; but as the desire of learning all the circumstances of this inexplicable adventure had, in the first instance, stopped his uplifted sword, he now determined that the culprits should be examined before his whole council, and in the mean time ordered them into strict confinement. His peers being assembled, he related to them the circumstances of the case, which were so strong that they could not avoid awarding the punishment of death against the guilty couple; but when the prisoners were brought into court, their youth, their air of innocence, and the evident anxiety of each for the fate of the other, awakened the utmost compassion of their judges, who flocked round them, and surveyed them with pity and astonishment. Florice had still on his finger the ring bestowed on him by his mother, and hastily putting it into the hand of his mistress, earnestly conjured her to preserve it, adding that when she should be secure, he could meet his fate, whatever it might be, with proper fortitude. But Blanchefleur, not less generous than her lover, scorned the means of surviving him; and during this contest of affection the ring was dropped on the ground and picked up by one of the lords, who hastened with it to the amiral, and related to him with tears of admiration the singular scene which he had witnessed.

The monarch, though he felt for Florice the rage of a disappointed rival, was not unmoved by this narrative, and, ordering the prisoners up to the throne, demanded of the youth if he had anything to say. He replied that he had merited death, and was prepared to suffer it, but humbly solicited the pardon of Blanchefleur; while she boldly proclaimed her own guilt, and refused, in the presence of the astonished amiral, any boon which she could not share with Florice. "Then," said he, "ye shall both die!" and, drawing his sword, saw them rush forward together, and stretch out their necks to receive the blow.

[1] Malediction. [2] Born. [3] Suffer, Sax.

The amiral, wroth though he were,
Both him changed mood and cheer.
For either for other woulde die,
And he saw so many a weeping eye,
And for he had so mochel loved the may,
Weeping he turned his head away;
And his swerd it fell to ground—

The lovers were pardoned; but the amiral insisted on knowing the contrivance by which Florice had been introduced into Blanchefleur's apartment; and this the youth refused to tell until he had obtained the full pardon of his accomplice. This being readily granted, he proceeded to relate his whole history, and to explain the means by which, after his long pilgrimage in search of Blanchefleur, he had overpowered the fidelity of the porter, and gained admission in a flower-basket to the bower of the ladies. The amiral, having thus learned the noble birth and valorous exploits of the young knight, seated him by his side; conferred on him a principal command in his armies; and permitted him to be solemnly united to his mistress in one of the Christian churches which were tolerated in his dominions. He even expressed his wish to be instructed in our holy religion; and, by the advice of Blanchefleur, renounced his wicked habit of changing his wives annually, and gave his hand to the lovely Clarice. The festivals instituted in honour of this marriage were scarcely finished, when Florice received the news of his father's death, and the invitation of his baronage to take possession of the throne of Murcia; but notwithstanding his anxiety to revisit his mother, he could not immediately tear himself from the amiral, his new convert, nor separate Blanchefleur from the amiable Clarice: so

They betaught the amiral our Dright,[1]
And they came home when they might,
And let crown him to king,
And her to queen, that sweet thing;
And underfong Christendom[2] of priestes hond,
And thonked God of all his sond.
Now ben they both dead,
Christ of heaven home their souls led.
Now is this tale brought to an end,
Of Florice and of his leman hend.

[1] Our Lord. [2] Received baptism.

ROBERT OF CYSILLE.

A copy of the following romance is preserved in the Public Library at Cambridge,[1] and another in the Harleian MSS. 1701, from which my transcript was made. It was never printed. Warton having already analysed it, I have compressed the following abstract as much as possible, and have avoided a repetition of such extracts as were already before the public.

Mr. Warton has justly observed, that the history of the Emperor Jovinian, in the 59th chapter of the Gesta Romanorum, is nearly identical with this romance. The incidents, however, are not exactly similar, and in some of these the Latin prose has a manifest advantage over the minstrel poem.

Robert, king of Sicily, brother to Pope Urban and to Valemond, emperor of Germany, was among the most powerful and valorous princes of Europe; but his arrogance was still more conspicuous than his power or his valour. Constantly occupied by the survey of his present greatness, or by projects for its future extension, he considered the performance of his religious duties as insufferably tedious; and never paid his adorations to the Supreme Being without evident reluctance and disgust. His guilt was great; and his punishment was speedy and exemplary.

Once upon a time, being present during vespers on the eve of St. John, his attention was excited by the following passage in the Magnificat; "deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles." He inquired of a *clerk* the meaning of these words; and, having heard the explanation, replied that such expressions were very foolish, since he, being the very flower of chivalry, was too mighty to be thrown down from his seat, and had no apprehension of seeing others exalted at his expense. The clerk did not presume to attempt any remonstrance; the service continued; Robert thought it longer and more tedious than ever, and at last fell fast asleep.

His slumber was not interrupted, nor indeed noticed by any of the congregation, because an angel having in the mean time assumed his features, together with the royal robes, had been attended by the usual officers to the palace, where supper was immediately served. Robert, however, awaked at the

[1] MS. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38. This version is printed in Halliwell's Nugæ Poeticæ, 1844.

close of day; was much astonished by the darkness of the church, and not less so by the solitude which surrounded him. He began to call loudly for his attendants, and at length attracted the notice of the sexton, who, conceiving him to be a thief secreted in the church for the purpose of stealing the sacred ornaments, approached the door with some precaution, and transmitted his suspicions through the key-hole. Robert indignantly repelled this accusation, affirming that he was the king; upon which the sexton, persuaded that he had lost his senses, and not at all desirous of having a madman under his care, readily opened the door, and was glad to see the supposed maniac run with all speed to the palace. But the palace gates were shut; and Robert, whose temper was never very enduring, and was now exasperated by rage and hunger, vainly attempted by threats of imprisonment, and even of death, to subdue the contumacy of the porter. While the metamorphosed monarch was venting his rage at the gate, this officer hastened to the hall, and, falling on his knees, requested his sovereign's orders concerning a madman who loudly asserted his right to the throne. The angel directed that he should be immediately admitted; and Robert at length appeared, covered with mud, in consequence of an affray in which he had flattened the porter's nose, and had been himself rolled in a puddle by the porter's assistants.

Without paying the least attention to these accidental circumstances, or to the clamours of the wounded man, who loudly demanded justice, he rushed up to the throne; and though a good deal startled at finding not only that, and all the attributes of royalty, but even his complete set of features, in the possession of another, he boldly proceeded to treat the angel as an impostor, threatening him with the vengeance of the pope and of the emperor, who, he thought, could not fail of distinguishing the true from the fictitious sovereign of Sicily.

> " Thou art my fool!" said the angel;
> Thou shalt be shorn, every deal,
> Like a fool, a fool to be:
> For thou hast now no dignity.
> Thine counsellor shall be an ape;
> And o clothing you shall be shape.—
> He shall ben thine own fere:
> Some wit of him thou might lere.

He cleped a barbe
That, as a fool, he al
All around like a fre
An hand-brede[a] abov
And on his crown m
He gan cry and mak
And said they should
That did him swich v

Thus was Robert reduced to
degradation; an object of contemp
he had been accustomed to despis
ger and thirst; and seeing his
compassion than those of the ani
his precarious and disgusting repas
lance were not subdued. To the
angel whether he still thought hir
to answer by haughty denunciatio
incensed almost to madness when t
stantly did, a general burst of laug

In the mean time Robert's don
verned by his angelic substitute. T
became a paragon of fertility; a
severe administration of equal ju
evil propensities seemed to be er
the happy Sicilians—

Every man loved well
Better love was never
In his time was never
Between man and [illegible]

join him, on Holy Thursday, at Rome. whither he proposed to go on a visit to his brother Urban. The angel welcomed the ambassadors; bestowed on them garments lined with ermine and embroidered with jewels, so exquisitely wrought as to excite universal astonishment; and departed in their company to Rome.—

The fool Robert also went,
Clothed in loathly garnement,
With fox-tails riven all about:
Men might have knowen in the rout.
An ape rode of his clothing;
So foul rode never king.

These strange figures, contrasted with the unparalleled magnificence of the angel and his attendants, produced infinite merriment among the spectators, whose shouts of admiration were enlivened by frequent peals of laughter.

Robert witnessed, in sullen silence, the demonstrations of affectionate regard with which the pope and the emperor welcomed their supposed brother; but at length, rushing forward, bitterly reproached them for thus joining in an unnatural conspiracy with the usurper of his throne. This violent sally, however, was received by his brothers, and by the whole papal court, as an undoubted proof of his madness; and he now learnt for the first time the real extent of his misfortune. His stubbornness and pride gave way, and were succeeded by sentiments of remorse and penitence.

We have already seen that he was not very profoundly versed in Scripture history, but he now fortunately recollected two examples which he considered as nearly similar to his own; those of Nebuchadnessar and Holofernes. Recalling to his mind their greatness and degradation, he observed that God alone had bestowed on them that power which he afterwards annihilated—

"So hath he mine, for my gult;
Now am I full lowe pult;[1]
And that is right that I so be:
Lord, on thy fool have thou pité!
That error hath made me to smart
That I had in my heart;
Lord, I leved not on thee:
Lord, on thy fool have thou pité.

[1] Put.—See Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 651.

Holy writ I had in despite;
Therefore reaved is my right;
Therefore is right a fool that I be:
Lord, of thy fool have thou pité," &c.

The sincerity of his contrition is evinced, in the original, by a long series of such stanzas, with little variation of thought or expression; but the foregoing specimen will, perhaps, suffice for the satisfaction of the reader.

After five weeks spent in Rome, the emperor, and the supposed King of Sicily, returned to their respective dominions, Robert being still accoutred in his fox-tails and accompanied by his ape, whom he now ceased to consider as his inferior. When returned to the palace, the angel, before the whole court, repeated his usual question; but the penitent, far from persevering in his former insolence, humbly replied, "that he was indeed a fool, or worse than a fool; but that he had at least acquired a perfect indifference for all worldly dignities." The attendants were now ordered to retire: and the angel, being left alone with Robert, informed him that his sins were forgiven; gave him a few salutary admonitions, and added,

"I am an angel of renown
Sent to keep thy regioun.
More joy me shall fall
In heaven, among mine feren all,
In an hour of a day,
Than here, I thee say,
In an hundred thousand year;
Though all the world, far and near,
Were mine at my liking:
I am an angel; thou art king!"

With these words he disappeared; and Robert, returning to the hall, received, not without some surprise and confusion, the usual salutations of the courtiers.

From this period he continued, during three years, to reign with so much justice and wisdom that his subjects had no cause to regret the change of their sovereign; after which, being warned by the angel of his approaching dissolution, he dictated to his secretaries a full account of his former perverseness, and of its strange punishment; and, having sealed it with the royal signet, ordered it to be sent, for the edification of his brothers, to Rome and Vienna. Both received, with due respect, the important lesson: the emperor often

recollected with tenderness and compassion the degraded situation of the valiant Robert; and the pope, besides availing himself of the story in a number of sermons addressed to the faithful, caused it to be carefully preserved in the archives of the Vatican, as a constant warning against pride, and an incitement to the performance of our religious duties.

SIR ISUMBRAS.

The following romance is abridged from the MS. copy in the library of Caius College, A. ix., collated with the printed copy in Mr. Garrick's plays. It consists of 130 six-lined stanzas.[1]

THERE was once a knight, who from his earliest infancy appeared to be the peculiar favourite of fortune. His birth was noble; his person equally remarkable for strength and beauty; his possessions so extensive as to furnish the amusements of hawking and hunting in the highest perfection. Though he had found no opportunity of signalizing his courage in war, he had borne away the prize at numberless tournaments; his courtesy was the theme of general praise; his hall was the seat of unceasing plenty; it was crowded with minstrels, whom he entertained with princely liberality, and the possession of a beautiful wife and three lovely children completed the sum of earthly happiness.

Sir Isumbras had many virtues; but he had one vice. In the pride of his heart he forgot the Giver of all good things, and considered the blessings so abundantly showered upon him, as the proper and just reward of his distinguished merit. Instances of this overweening presumption might perhaps be found in all ages among the possessors of wealth and power; but few sinners have the good fortune to be recalled, like Sir Isumbras, by a severe but salutary punishment, to the pious sentiments of Christian humility.

[1] This romance is printed from a MS. at Lincoln in the Thornton Romances, edited by Halliwell, 1844. No French original of it has been discovered, but it is most probable that it was derived from the Anglo-Norman.

It was usual with knights to amuse themselves with hawking or hunting whenever they were not occupied by more serious business; and as business seldom intervened, they thus amused themselves every day in the year. One morning, being mounted on his favourite steed, surrounded by his dogs, and with a hawk on his fist, Sir Isumbras cast his eyes on the sky, and discovered an angel, who, hovering over him, reproached him with his pride, and announced the punishment of instant and complete degradation.

The terrified culprit immediately fell on his knees; acknowledged the justice of his sentence; returned thanks to Heaven for deigning to visit him with adversity while the possession of youth and health enabled him to endure it; and, filled with contrition, prepared to return from the forest. But scarcely had the angel disappeared, when his good steed suddenly fell dead under him; the hawk dropped from his fist; his hounds wasted and expired; and being thus left alone, he hastened on foot towards his palace, filled with melancholy forebodings, but impatient to learn the whole extent of his misfortune.

He was shortly met by a part of his household, who, with many tears, informed him that his horses and oxen had been suddenly struck dead with lightning, and that his capons were all stung to death with adders. He received the tidings with humble resignation, commanded his servants to abstain from murmurs against Providence, and passed on. He was next met by a page, who related that his castle was burned to the ground, that many of his servants had lost their lives, and that his wife and children had with great difficulty escaped from the flames. Sir Isumbras, rejoiced that Heaven had yet spared those who were most dear to him, bestowed upon the astonished page his purse of gold as a reward for the intelligence.

A doleful sight then gan he see;
His wife and children three
  Out of the fire were fled:
There they sat, under a thorn,
Bare and naked as they were born,
  Brought out of their bed.
A woful man then was he,
When he saw them all naked be.
  The lady said, all so blive,
"For nothing, sir, be ye adrad."

He did off his surcote of pallade,[1]
And with it clad his wife.
His scarlet mantle then shore he;
Therein he closed his children three
That naked before him stood.

He then proposed to his wife, that, as an expiation of their sins, they should instantly undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; and, cutting with his knife a sign of the cross on his naked shoulder, set off with the four companions of his misery, resolving to beg his bread till he should arrive at the holy sepulchre.

After passing through "seven lands," supported by the scanty alms of the charitable, they arrived at length at a forest where they wandered during three days without meeting a single habitation. Their food was reduced to the few berries which they were able to collect; and the children, unaccustomed to such hard fare, began to sink under the accumulated difficulties of their journey. In this situation they were stopped by a wide and rapid though shallow river. Sir Isumbras, taking his eldest son in his arms, carried him over to the opposite bank, and, placing him under a bush of broom, directed him to dry his tears, and amuse himself by playing with the blossoms till his return with his brother. But scarcely had he left the place, when a lion, starting from a neighbouring thicket, seized the child, and bore him away into the recesses of the forest. The second son became, in like manner, the prey of an enormous leopard; and the disconsolate mother, when carried over with her infant to the fatal spot, was with difficulty persuaded to survive the loss of her two elder children. Sir Isumbras, though he could not repress the tears extorted by this cruel calamity, exerted himself to console his wife, and humbly confessing his sins, contented himself with praying that his present misery might be accepted by Heaven as a partial expiation.

Through forest they went days three,
Till they came to the Greekish sea;
They grette, and were full wo!
As they stood upon the land,
They saw a fleet come sailand,
Three hundred ships and mo.

[1] *Palata*, Lat. (*Paletot*, O. Fr.) sometimes signifying a particular stuff, and sometimes a particular dress. See Du Cange.

With top-castels set on-loft,
Richly then were they wrought,
With joy and mickle pride:
A heathen king was therein,
That Christendom came to win;
His power was full wide.

It was now seven days since the pilgrims had tasted bread or meat; the soudan's galley, therefore, was no sooner moored to the beach, than they hastened on board to beg for food. The soudan, under the apprehension that they were spies, ordered them to be driven back on shore: but his attendants observed to him that these could not be common beggars; that the robust limbs and tall stature of the husband proved him to be a knight in disguise; and that the delicate complexion of the wife, who was "bright as blossom on tree," formed a striking contrast to the ragged apparel by which she was very imperfectly covered. They were now brought into the royal presence; and the soudan, addressing Sir Isumbras, immediately offered him as much treasure as he should require, on condition that he should renounce Christianity, and consent to fight under the Saracen banners. The answer was a respectful but peremptory refusal, concluded by an earnest petition for a little food; but the soudan, having by this time turned his eyes from Sir Isumbras to the beautiful companion of his pilgrimage, paid no attention to his request;

The soudan beheld that lady there,
Him thought an angel that she were,
Comen a-down from heaven:
"Man! I will give thee gold and fee,
An thou that woman will sellen me,
More than thou can neven.
I will thee given an hundred pound
Of pennies that ben whole and round,
And rich robes seven:
She shall be queen of my land,
And all men bow unto her hand,
And none withstand her steven."
Sir Isumbras said, "Nay!
My wife I will nought sell away,
Though ye me for her sloo!

[1] Name. [2] Voice, *i.e.* command.

I wedded her in Godis lay,
To hold her to mine ending day,
Both for weal and wo."

It evidently would require no small share of casuistry to construe this declaration into an acceptance of the bargain; but the Saracens, having heard the offer of their sovereign, deliberately counted out the stipulated sum on the mantle of Sir Isumbras; took possession of the lady; carried the knight with his infant son on shore; beat him till he was scarcely able to move; and then returned for further orders.

During this operation, the soudan, with own hand, placed the regal crown on the head of his intended bride: but recollecting that the original object of his voyage to Europe was to conquer it, which might possibly occasion a loss of some time, he delayed his intended nuptial, and ordered a fast-sailing vessel to convey her to his dominions, providing her at the same time with a charter addressed to his subjects, in which he enjoined them to obey her, from the moment of her landing, as their legitimate sovereign.

The lady, emboldened by these tokens of deference on the part of her new lord, now fell on her knees and entreated his permission to pass a few moments in private with her former husband; and the request was instantly granted by the complaisant Saracen. Sir Isumbras, still smarting from his bruises, was conducted with great respect and ceremony to his wife, who, embracing him with tears, earnestly conjured him to seek her out as soon as possible in her new dominions, to murder his infidel rival, and to take possession of a throne which was probably reserved to him by Heaven as an indemnification for his past losses. She then supplied him with provisions for a fortnight; kissed him and her infant son; swooned three times; and then set sail for Africa.

Sir Isumbras, who had been set on shore quite confounded by this quick succession of strange adventures, followed the vessel with his eyes till it vanished from his sight, and then, taking his son by the hand, led him up to some rocky woodlands in the neighbourhood. Here they sat down under a tree, and after a short repast, which was moistened with their tears, resumed their journey. But they were again bewildered in the forest; and, after gaining the summit of the mountain without being able to descry a single habitation, lay dow the bare ground and resigned themselves to sleep.

The next morning Sir Isumbras found that his misfortunes were not yet terminated. He had carried his stock of provisions, together with his gold, the fatal present of the soudan, enveloped in a scarlet mantle; and scarcely had the sun darted his first rays on the earth, when an eagle, attracted by the red cloth, darted down upon the treasure and bore it off in his talons. Sir Isumbras, waking at the moment, perceived the theft, and for some time hastily pursued the flight of the bird, who, he expected, would speedily drop the heavy and useless burthen: but he was disappointed; for the eagle, constantly towering as he approached the sea, at length directed his flight towards the opposite shore of Africa. Sir Isumbras slowly returned to his child, whom he had no longer the means of feeding; but the wretched father only arrived in time to behold the boy snatched from him by a unicorn.

The knight was now quite disheartened. But his last calamity was so evidently miraculous, that even the grief of the father was nearly absorbed in the contrition of the sinner. He fell on his knees, and uttering a most fervent prayer to Jesus and the Virgin, proceeded on his journey.

His attention was soon attracted by the sound of a smith's bellows: he quickly repaired to the forge, and requested the charitable donation of a little food; but was told by the labourers that he seemed well able to work as they did, and that they had nothing to throw away in charity.

Then answered the knight again,
"For meat would I swink fain."
Fast he bare and drow;[2]
They given him meat and drink anon,
And taughten him to bear stone:
Then had he shame enow.

This novitiate lasted a twelvemonth, and seven years expired before he had fully attained all the mysteries of his new profession. He employed his few leisure hours in fabricating a complete suit of armour; every year had brought to his ears an account of the progress of the Saracens; and he could not help entertaining a hope that his arm, though so ignobly employed, was destined, at some future day, to revenge the wrongs of the Christians, as well as the injury which he had personally received from the unbelievers.

At length he heard that the Christian army had again taken the field; that the day was fixed for a great and final effort;

[1] Labour. [2] Drew.

and that a plain at an inconsiderable distance from his shop was appointed for the scene of action. Sir Isumbras rose before day, buckled on his armour; and, mounting a horse which had hitherto been employed in carrying coals, proceeded to the field, and took a careful survey of the disposition of both armies. When the trumpets gave the signal to charge, he dismounted, fell on his knees, and after a short but fervent prayer to Heaven, again sprang into his saddle, and rode into the thickest ranks of the enemy. His uncouth war-horse and awkward armour had scarcely less effect than his wonderful address and courage in attracting the attention of both parties; and when, after three desperate charges, his sorry steed was slain under him, one of the Christian chiefs made a powerful effort for his rescue, bore him to a neighbouring eminence, and presented to him a more suitable coat of armour, and a horse more worthy of the heroic rider.

When he was armed on that steed,
It is seen where his horse yede,
  And shall be evermore.
As sparkle glides off the glede,[2]
In that stour he made many bleed,
  And wrought hem wonder sore.
He rode up into the mountain,
The soudan soon hath he slain,
  And many that with him were.
All that day lasted the fight;
Sir Isumbras, that noble knight,
  Wan the battle there.
Knights and squires han him sought,
And before the king him brought;
  Full sore wounded was he.
They asked what was his name;
He said, "Sire, a smith's man;
  What will ye do with me?"
The Christian king said, than,
"I trow never smith's man
  In war was half so wight."
"I bid[3] you, give me meat and drink,
And what that I will after think,
  'Till I have kevered[4] my might."

[1] Went. [2] Burning coal. [3] Pray. [4] Recovered.

The king a great oath sware,
As soon as he whole were,
That he would dub him knight.
In a nunnery they him leaved,
To heal the wounds in his heved,
That he took in that fight.
The nuns of him were ful fain,
For he had the soudan slain,
And many heathen hounds;
For his sorrow they gan sore rue;
Every day they salved him new,
And stopped well his wounds.

We may fairly presume, without derogating from the merit of the holy sisters, or from the virtue of their salves and bandages, that the knight's recovery was no less accelerated by the pleasure of having chastized the insolent purchaser of his wife, and the author of his contumelious beating. In a few days his health was restored; and, having provided himself with a "scrip and pike," and the other accoutrements of a Palmer, he took his leave of the nuns, directed his steps once more to the "Greekish Sea," and, embarking on board of a vessel which he found ready to sail, speedily arrived in the port of Acre.

During seven years, which were employed in visiting every part of the Holy Land, the penitent Sir Isumbras led a life of continued labour and mortification; fed during the day by the precarious contributions of the charitable, and sleeping at night in the open air, without any addition to the scanty covering which his pilgrim's weeds, after seven years' service, were able to afford. At length his patience and contrition were rewarded.

After a day spent in fruitless applications for a little food,

Beside the burgh of Jerusalem
He sat him by a well-stream,
Sore wepand for his sin.
And as he sat, about midnight,
There came angel fair and bright,
And brought him bread and wine;
He said, "Palmer, well thou be!
The King of heaven greeteth well thee;
Forgiven is sin thine."

Sir Isumbras accepted with pious gratitude the donation of food, by which his strength was instantly restored, and again set out on his travels: but he was still a widower; still deprived of his children, and as poor as ever; nor had his heavenly monitor afforded him any hint for his future guidance. He wandered therefore through the country, without any settled purpose, till he arrived at a "rich burgh," built round a "fair castle," the possessor of which, he was told, was a charitable queen, who daily distributed a florin of gold to every poor man who approached her gates, and even condescended to provide food and lodging within her palace for such as were distinguished by superior misery. Sir Isumbras presented himself with the rest; and his emaciated form and squalid garments procured him instant admittance.

The rich queen in hall was set;
Knights her served, at hand and feet,
In rich robes of pall:
In the floor a cloth was laid;
"The poor Palmer," the steward said,
"Shall sit above you all."
Meat and drink forth they brought;
He sat still, and ate right nought,
But looked about the hall.
So mickle he saw of game and glee,
(Swiche mirths he was wont to see)
The tears he let down fall.

A conduct so unusual attracted the attention of the whole company, and even of the queen, who ordering "a chair with a cushion" to be placed near the Palmer, took her seat in it, entered into conversation with him on the subject of his long and painful pilgrimage, and was much edified by the moral lessons which he interspersed in his narrative. But no importunity could induce him to taste food: he was sick at heart, and required the aid of solitary meditation to overcome the painful recollections which continually assailed him. The queen was more and more astonished, but at length left him to his reflections, after declaring that "for her lord's soul, or for his love, if he were still alive," she was determined to retain the holy Palmer in her palace, and to assign him a convenient apartment, together with a "knave" or servant to attend him.

An interval of fifteen years, passed in the laborious

pations of blacksmith and pilgrim, may be supposed to have produced a very considerable alteration in the appearance of Sir Isumbras; and even his voice, subdued by disease and penance, may have failed to detect the gallant knight under the disguise which he had so long assumed. But that his wife (for such she was) should have been equally altered by the sole operation of time; that the air and gestures and accents of a person once so dear and so familiar to him, should have awakened no trace of recollection in the mind of a husband, though in the midst of scenes which painfully recalled the memory of his former splendour, is more extraordinary. Be this as it may, the knight and the queen, though lodged under the same roof, and passing much of their time together, continued to bewail the miseries of their protracted widowhood.

Sir Isumbras, however, speedily recovered, in the plentiful court of the rich queen, his health and strength, and with these, the desire of returning to his former exercises. A tournament was proclaimed; and the lists, which were formed immediately under the windows of the castle, were speedily occupied by a number of Saracen knights, all of whom Sir Isumbras successively overthrew. So dreadful was the stroke of his spear, that many were killed at the first encounter; some escaped with a few broken bones; others were thrown headlong into the castle ditch; but the greater number consulted their safety by a timely flight; while the queen contemplated with pleasure and astonishment the unparalleled exploits of her favourite Palmer.

Then fell it, upon a day,
The knight went him for to play,
As it was ere his kind;
A fowl's nest he found on high;
A red cloth therein he seygh[1]
Wavand[2] in the wind.
To the nest he gan win;[3]
His own mantle he found therein;
The gold there gan he find.

The painful recollection awakened by this discovery weighed heavily on the soul of Sir Isumbras. He bore the fatal treasure to his chamber, concealed it under his bed, and spent the remainder of the day in tears and lamentations. The images of his lost wife and children now began to haunt

[1] Saw. [2] Waving. [3] Go.

him continually; and his altered demeanour attracted the attention and excited the curiosity of the whole court, and even of the queen, who could only learn from the Palmer's attendant that his melancholy seemed to originate in the discovery of something found in a bird's nest. With this strange report she was compelled to be satisfied, till Sir Isumbras, with the hope of dissipating his grief, began to resume his usual exercises in the field: but no sooner had he quitted his chamber, than the "squires" by her command broke open the door, discovered the treasure, and hastened with it to the royal apartment.

The sight of the gold and of the scarlet mantle immediately explained to the queen the whole mystery of the Palmer's behaviour. She burst into tears; kissed with fervent devotion the memorial of her lost husband; fell into a swoon; and, on her recovery, told the whole story to her attendants, and enjoined them to go in quest of the Palmer, and to bring him immediately before her. A short explanation removed her few remaining doubts; she threw herself into the arms of her husband, and the re-union of this long separated couple was immediately followed by the coronation of Sir Isumbras, and by a long series of festivities.

The Saracen subjects of this Christian sovereign continued, with unshaken loyalty, to partake of the plenteous entertainments provided for all ranks of people on this solemn occasion: but no sooner had the pious Isumbras signified to them the necessity of their immediate conversion, than his whole "parliament" adopted the resolution of deposing and committing to the flames their newly-acquired sovereign, as soon as they should have obtained the concurrence of the neighbouring princes. Two of these readily joined their forces for the accomplishment of this salutary purpose, and, invading the territories of Sir Isumbras with an army of thirty thousand men, sent him, according to usual custom, a solemn defiance.

Sir Isumbras boldly answered the defiance, issued the necessary orders, called for his arms, sprang upon his horse, and prepared to march out against the enemy; when he discovered that his subjects had, to a man, abandoned him, and that he must encounter singly the whole host of the invaders.

Sir Isumbras was bold and keen,
And took his leave at the queen,
And sighed wonder sore:

He said, "Madam, have good day!
Sekerly, as you I say,
For now and evermore!"
"Help me, sir, that I were dight
In arms, as it were a knight;
I will with you fare:
Gif God would us grace send
That we may together end,
Then done were all my care."
Soon was the lady dight
In arms, as it were a knight;
He gave her spear and shield:
Again thirty thousand Saracens, and mo,
There came no mo but they two,
When they met in field.

Never, probably, did a contest take place between such disproportioned forces. Sir Isumbras was rather encumbered than assisted by the presence of his beautiful but feeble helpmate; and the faithful couple were on the point of being crushed by the charge of the enemy, when three unknown knights suddenly made their appearance, and as suddenly turned the fortune of the day. The first of these was mounted on a lion, the second on a leopard, and the third on a unicorn. The Saracen cavalry, at the first sight of these unexpected antagonists, dispersed in all directions. But flight and resistance were equally hopeless: three-and-twenty thousand unbelievers were soon laid lifeless on the plain by the talons of the lion and leopard, by the resistless horn of the unicorn, or by the sword of their young and intrepid riders; and the small remnant of the Saracen army who escaped from the general carnage quickly spread, through every corner of the Mahometan empire, the news of this signal and truly miraculous victory.

Sir Isumbras, who does not seem to have possessed the talent of unravelling mysteries, had never suspected that his three miraculous auxiliaries were his own children, whom Providence had sent to his assistance at the moment of his greatest distress; but he was not the less thankful when informed of the happy termination of all his calamities. The royal family were received in the city with every demonstration of joy by his penitent subjects, whose loyalty had been completely revived by the recent miracle. Magnificent en-

tertainments were provided; after which, Sir Isumbras, having easily overrun the territories of his two Pagan neighbours who had been slain in the last battle, proceeded to conquer a third kingdom for his younger son; and the four monarchs, uniting their efforts for the propagation of the true faith, enjoyed, *as the romance tells us*, the happiness of witnessing the baptism of all the inhabitants of their respective dominions.

They lived and died in good intent;
Unto heaven their souls went,
When that they dead were.
Jesu Christ, heaven's king,
Give us, aye, his blessing,
And shield us from care!

SIR TRIAMOUR.

The abstract of the following romance has been made from the copy printed by William Copland, contained in the British Museum. Bishop Percy mentions two more printed copies as extant in the Bodleian Library; a MS. in the public library at Cambridge[1], and another in his own folio. It consists of 1592 lines.

Aradas was King of Arragon. He was young, active, and brave; he reigned over a numerous and obedient people: and he added, to the good fortune of wearing a crown, the more enviable felicity of sharing it with the mistress of his heart, the beautiful and affectionate Margaret. But perfect happiness is not given to humanity; and even Aradas and his queen had still one wish ungratified.

Either to other made great moan,
For children together had they none,
Begotten of their bodé;
Therefore the king, I understond,
Made a vow to go to the Holy Lond,
Therefore to fight and to sle.

This sudden and unexpected resolution, when communicated to the queen, filled her with horror and dismay. Though not less anxious than her husband for the completion of their mutual wishes, she doubted the efficacy of the means: her piety suggested to her that Heaven might possibly be irritated by a vow evidently dicated by impatience; and her affection represented in frightful colours the dangers to which Aradas would be exposed,

[1] Printed by the Percy Society, ed. Halliwell, 1846.

while employed in slaughtering the crowds of Saracens whose death might be required as the purchase of an heir to the crown of Arragon. But neither the length of the voyage, the hazards of the sea, the dangers of an ungenial climate, nor the multitude and ferocity of the unbelievers, could arrest for a moment the impetuosity of the king: he assumed the cross, assembled an army, and was soon ready to depart. His devotion met its due reward; and the accurate romancer informs us that, on the very last night which he passed with his queen, his vow had its long-expected operation; though at the time (as the historian sagaciously adds) they were both unconscious of their success.

The moment of separation, however, awakened in the heart of Aradas all those sentiments of tenderness which the hurry of his preparations had suspended. He blended his tears with those of his beloved Margaret; kissed and embraced her a thousand times; and, after having taken his leave, returned again and again to repeat his assurances of love and fidelity, to recommend her to the protection of Heaven, and to reiterate his injunctions to his steward Marrock, whom he left as superintendant of the kingdom, that no pains should be spared to alleviate the sorrow of the queen during his long and necessary absence.

It unfortunately happened that the steward Marrock, to whom this important charge was committed, was the falsest steward that ever abused the confidence of his sovereign. His assiduity to gratify, and even to anticipate, the wishes of Margaret was, indeed, unremitting; but it soon appeared that his attentions, instead of being dicated by zeal for his master, were the result of a criminal passion for the queen. Having exhausted all those indirect means of seduction which his unlimited power in the state enabled him to employ, he had the audacity to make a direct avowal of his wishes, and repeated his solicitations so frequently, that the queen, after trying in vain to recall him to a sense of his duty, was obliged to threaten him with the instant disclosure of his treason. Marrock now changed his plan. He fell on his knees, entreated her to forgive and to conceal the apparent insolence of a conduct which, as he pretended, had been intended only as a trial of her constancy; and retired with the resolution of ruining, if possible, the victim whom he was unable to seduce.

In the mean time, Aradas was, "full far in Heatheness," accomplishing his vow by the slaughter of numberless Saracens.

> In the Heathen Land, and also in Pagany,
> And in every other land that he came by,
> There sprang of him great los.[1]
> When he had done his pilgrimage,
> And laboured all that great voyage,

[1] Praise.

With all his good will and liberte,
At flome[1] Jordan, and at Bethlem,
And at Calvary beside Jerusalem,
In all the places was he.
Then he longed to come home—

ıch had been the rapidity of his military achievements, and aculous was the prosperity of his voyage, that he arrived in ›minions while his queen was still "great with child," ı, it may be presumed, in daily expectation of her delivery. did the lovely Margaret appear so lovely in his eyes. His ew no bounds; and the fair partner of his throne forgot, in light at her lord's return, the misery she had endured from ›sence, and from the insolent addresses of the traitor Mar- But malice is more provident; and the artful steward the earliest opportunity of carrying into effect his long- ıted purpose.

ıis first interview with the king, he boldly asserted that the to whose birth he looked forward with such pleasure, had begotten in adultery: and when Aradas, astonished at this ected intelligence, reproached him with negligence of his ›, he replied, that he also had long been duped by the dis- ıtion of Margaret, and had only been convinced of her inence by finding her in the arms of an unknown knight, , in the first transports of his indignation, he had stabbed his own hand. He added that the queen, after his disco- had spared no pains to seduce him into a participation · guilt, for the purpose of insuring his secrecy; but that nse of duty to his master was paramount to every other eration.

das, always subject to be carried away by first impressions, inded by his implicit confidence in the steward's integrity, ıt stop to inquire into the truth of the charge, but was pro- ıg to condemn his queen to the flames, and to order her t execution, when Marrock, whose calumny might have possibly disproved, and whose further views would have infallibly prevented by such a sentence, interfered, and in- the king to commute the punishment.

Marrock said, "This counsel I;—
Banish her out of your land, truly,
Far into exile:
Deliver her an ambling steed,
And an old knight her for to lead;
Thus, by my counsel, look you do:
And give them some spending,
That may them out of the land to-bring;
I would no better than so."

[1] River.

He did her clothe in purple weed,
And set her on an old steed,
  That was both crooked and almost blind;
He took her an old knight,
Kin to the queen, and Sir Roger hight,
  That was both courteous and kind.
Three days he gave them leave to pass;
And, after that day set was,
  If men might them find,
The queen should be brenned stark dead,
In a fire, with flames red:
  This came of the steward's mind!
Forty florins, for their expence,
The king bade give them, in his presence,
  And commanded them to go;
The lady mourned as she should die;
For all this, she wist not why
  He fared with her so.
The queen began to make sorrow and care,
When she from the king should fare,
  With wrong, against all reason;
For they went, in number three;
Sir Roger, the queen, and the greyhound truly;
  Ah! wo worth the wicked treason!

It may be proper in this place to apprise the reader that the greyhound, who is thus abruptly introduced, had been bred by Sir Roger; that he was remarkable from his uncommon size and fierceness; and that his unexampled fidelity to his master rendered him well worthy to occupy the distinguished place which is allotted to him in the sequel of the story.

While the lovely Margaret was bewailing her unmerited misfortunes; while the good Sir Roger was employed in very useless endeavours to console her; while the whole court of Arragon was plunged in sorrow and consternation from the loss of its brightest ornament; the wicked Marrock was occupied in preparing to seize the long-expected reward of his successful villany.

As the exiles could not travel with much expedition, he easily got the start of them; and stationing himself, with a company of eighteen chosen associates, in the first forest on their way, suddenly assailed them, in the hope of easily overpowering the old knight, and carrying off the defenceless Margaret. But Sir Roger, though unprovided with defensive armour, wielded his sword with such skill and activity, and was so powerfully assisted by his dog, who "full bitterly gan bite," that he soon began to thin the ranks, and to occupy the whole attention of his assailants. Fourteen of them had fallen beneath the sword of the brave old knight, when Marrock, suddenly attacking him from behind,

l his spear through his body, and extended him lifeless on :ound. But, nearly at the same moment, the queen, finding f unguarded, sprang from her horse, and concealed herself ectually in a neighbouring thicket, that Marrock and his urviving associates, after a long and fruitless search, were illed to abandon their prey; and quitted the forest, having ously returned to vent their malice by mangling with a and wounds the lifeless author of their disappointment.

rgaret, being at length convinced of their retreat, issued her hiding-place, and found the body of her knight, sur-led by those of his slaughtered enemies. At this cruel aggra-n of her calamity, she became almost frantic with grief, tore air, and bitterly reproached herself for having occasioned eath of her generous protector. At length, awakening to a of her present danger, she ran to seize her horse, which had nately remained where she left him, and then endeavoured ure the company of the dog, as a guide through the forest nich she was encompassed; but the faithful animal seemed entive to her caresses, and refused to abandon the body of aster—

She said, "Sir Roger, now thou art dead,
Who shall now the right way lead?
For thou mayst speak no more!"
Right on the ground, there as he lay dead,
She kissed him, ere she from him yede;
God wot, her heart was sore:
What for sorrow and dread,
Fast away she gan her speed,
She wist not whither ne where:
The good grey-hound, for weal ne wo,
Would not fro the knight go;
But lay and licked his wound:
He weened to have healed him again,
And thereto he did his pain;
Lo, such love is in a hound!

ven scraped a pit for the dead body, covered it with moss and s, and guarded it with constant attention, except during the s when he was employed in securing his own subsistence.

argaret, under the guidance of Providence, continued her h, and arrived, quite extenuated with fatigue and want, on borders of Hungary;[1] where, having alighted from her horse e entrance of a wood, she was suddenly taken in labour, and ered of a beautiful boy. This was a reward for all her suffer-

The first sounds of her infant's voice, the first view of its tres, at once erased all sense of her husband's injustice, of her

[1] From Arragon to Hungary is a long march, but we must not expect the authors of these metrical romances much attention to geogra-l accuracy.

late misery, and of her present unprotected situation. Having washed and clothed her child, she folded him to her breast, lay down under a tree, and, with full reliance on the protection of Heaven, whose mercies had hitherto guarded her, quietly resigned herself to sleep.

In this state she was discovered by a Hungarian knight, Sir Bernard de Mauservyne, who, in pursuing a hind, was led to the place of her retreat. Having for some time contemplated with astonishment the beauty of her person and the magnificence of her dress, which so ill accorded with the miserable appearance of her horse and her total want of attendants, his courtesy led him to interrupt her slumbers for the purpose of offering her that assistance of which she evidently was in immediate want; and, after hearing so much of her history as she thought fit to communicate, placed her, with her child, on his horse, conducted her to his castle, and appointed for her service a retinue suited to her rank. Her child was christened by the name of Triamour, and the little orphan soon became the general favourite of the castle; while Margaret, constantly treated as a sovereign, and daily occupied with the education of her son, experienced a degree of happiness and tranquillity which she had never enjoyed in the possession of the throne of Arragon.

We must now return to the grave of Sir Roger, for whose murder the hand of Heaven was preparing to wreak its vengeance on the head of the wicked Sir Marrock. The faithful greyhound, whom we left on the body of his master, had continued, during seven years, to occupy his post, which he only quitted for the purpose of seeking his daily subsistence. As his prey diminished, the length of his chase gradually increased; and, at the close of the seventh year, at the festival of Christmas, he suddenly appeared, gaunt with hunger, an unexpected visitor in the hall of the king of Arragon. Such an apparition excited general surprise, and particularly attracted the attention of Aradas: but the animal, with a gentleness of demeanour which belied his savage appearance, made the round of the tables and disappeared. He returned on the second day, again surveyed the company, received his pittance, and retreated. The king now recollected the dog, and gave orders to his attendants that, if he should again return, they should follow him without loss of time, in the confidence that he would lead them to the place where Sir Roger and the queen were secreted. On the third day of the festival, the hall was filled at an early hour, and Sir Marrock, for the first time, took his seat among the guests. The greyhound too did not fail to repeat his visit, and, with the rapidity of lightning, instantly sprang upon the murderer of his master.

He took the steward by the throat,
And asunder he it bote;

But then he would not 'bide:
For to this grave he ran;
There followed him many a man,
Some on horse, and some beside.
And when he came where his master was,
He laid him down upon the grass,
And barked at the men again.

The crowd who had followed him, being unable to drive him from the spot, returned with the tidings to the king, who instantly comprehended the whole mystery. He directed them to dig for the body, which they readily found, and which had been miraculously preserved in such a state of perfection as to be easily recognized. It was then buried in holy ground with all due solemnity, and the faithful dog shortly after expired on the tomb which was raised to the memory of his master. The body of Sir Marrock, after being dragged through the town, was hanged upon a gibbet, and messengers were dispatched in every direction to proclaim these acts of justice, to inquire for the innocent Margaret, and to restore her to that throne from which she had been so cruelly and unjustly driven. But the messengers returned without hearing any tidings of the queen; and the unfortunate Aradas was doomed to expiate, by many years of contrition and remorse, the fatal and precipitate decision by which he had thrown away the means of happiness.

In the mean time, the young Triamour received an excellent education in the castle of Sir Bernard, being instructed in all the arts of courtesy under the careful eye of his mother, and by Sir Bernard himself in all the accomplishments preparatory to the exercise of chivalry. He had scarcely finished his fourteenth year, when he was considered, by the little court in which he lived, as a model of beauty, strength, and activity; and having surpassed all his youthful competitors, he became impatient for an opportunity of trying his powers in a conflict with adversaries more worthy of his prowess. His wishes were soon gratified.

The king of Hungary died at an advanced age, leaving an only daughter to inherit his vast possessions. Her early beauty had occasioned her to be universally known by the name of the fair Helen; and she had just entered on her fifteenth year, when she was called to wield the sceptre of a kingdom surrounded by powerful and ambitious neighbours, to whose attacks the possession of her person was likely to prove an additional inducement. She was therefore advised by her council to choose, without delay, a partner of the throne, who should be capable of defending it against all competition; and as she felt no predilection for any of her numerous admirers, she ordered the proclamation of a tournament, to be holden at the usual period of six months, for the purpose of ascertaining the successful candidate.

The news of this great event, being quickly spread through Europe, reached Triamour in his retreat. He hastened to Sir Bernard, and earnestly requested the loan of a horse and armour, that he might be enabled to enter the lists, where he trusted that his conduct would not disgrace the lessons of his kind preceptor: and the good knight, after some admonitions, intended to temper and moderate rather than to repress his eagerness, not only consented to furnish him with the necessary accoutrements, but promised to accompany him to the field of honour.

Triamour, having completed his preparations, threw himself at the feet of his mother, and implored her blessing on this his first enterprise. But her consent was not easily obtained. Thunderstruck at the prospect of such a sudden separation, and aware of all the dangers attendant on the career on which he was now entering, she endeavoured, with tears and solicitations, to divert him from his purpose; till finding him unalterably fixed, and having obtained the promise of his speedy return, she was at length compelled to acquiesce, and reluctantly consigned him to the care of Sir Bernard.

Then was the fair lady set
Full high upon a turret,
For to behold that play:
There was many a seemly knight,
Princes, dukes, and lords of might,
Themselves for to assay;
With helmes on their heades bright,
That all the field shone on that light;
They were so stout and gay.

It is unnecessary to enumerate the champions who fought on the three days of this tournament, because the reader will conclude that it attracted all who were distinguished by their valour, and that all were successively overthrown by the irresistible Triamour. At each exploit, Sir Bernard proclaimed aloud, for the information of the heralds, the name of the unknown adventurer, and

Fair Helen that was so mild,
More she beheld Triamour the child,
Than all the other men.

Before the conclusion of the first day she began to feel herself warmly interested in his success, and this interest increased to such a degree as to render her a most anxious spectator of the remaining combats, which were to decide whether her hand should be ultimately allotted to the hero on whom her heart was already bestowed. She beheld therefore with transports of joy the ultimate triumph of young Triamour, and retired from the tournament in the hope of hailing him on the morrow as king of Hungary, and of receiving him as her husband. But Fate had decreed that her wishes should not be quite so speedily accomplished.

Among the combatants at the tournament were two knights, who had entered the lists with very different purposes. One of these was Aradas, who had been attracted to the ceremony partly by the hopes of hearing, at such a concourse of strangers, some tidings of his long-lost Margaret, and partly in the view of suspending, amidst the tumult and fatigue of arms, those sentiments of grief and remorse by which he was incessantly tormented. On the first day, he had been engaged on the same side with Triamour, whose valour and activity he had beheld with admiration. On the second, having tried his force with him, he had been suddenly unhorsed; which only increased his esteem for his adversary. The other knight was Sir James, son of the emperor of Germany, who, being assured by his courtiers that he was the most perfect knight in the world, had projected to begin his career of chivalry by overthrowing all his competitors in the present tournament, and by seizing the beautiful Helen and the crown of Hungary. Big with these views, he had encountered the lance of Triamour; and had been thrown to a considerable distance in the field, severely bruised, and cruelly mortified. As the law of tournaments did not permit him to enter the lists a second time with his conqueror, he determined to kill him after the ceremony; and, when the combatants prepared to retire to their tents, collected all his adherents, assailed Triamour, who was only accompanied by Sir Bernard, and gave him a dangerous wound in the thigh. But, at the same moment, the spear of Triamour met the face of Sir James, passed into his brain, and laid him lifeless on the ground. His attendants then attacked the two knights, whom they hoped to sacrifice to the manes of their slaughtered master; and Triamour, weakened by the loss of blood, must have been finally overpowered by the superiority of numbers, had he not been rescued by Sir Aradas, who, coming up with his company, put an end to the unequal conflict. Sir Bernard only staid in his tent till he had bound up his friend's wound, and then hastened to his castle, and consigned him to the care of Margaret and to the skill of the best leeches which the country could furnish.

On the following day the combatants repaired to the palace to hear the decision of the fair Helen, who was equally surprised and mortified at being unable to discover among the company the person of Sir Triamour, or to learn the cause of his absence. She however represented to the company that "she was bound to abide by the conditions of the tournament which she had herself fixed; that she was now become the property of the victor, though he was at present prevented, by some unknown impediment, from preferring his claim; and that she must at least suspend her decision for a year and a day, an interval which the law of arms had secured to him, before his rights could be forfeited by his non-appearance." This award, being strictly consonant to usage, was

unanimously confirmed by the persons present, and fair Helen was relieved, for the time, from the persecutions of her suitors.

While the lovely princess of Hungary, being totally unacquainted with the tragical termination of the tournament, was bewailing the unaccountable disappearance of her lover; and while the tender Margaret was lamenting the wound of her son; the body of Sir James was carried to the emperor, whose whole court was plunged in consternation by the loss of the hero whose triumph they had so confidently anticipated. The unfortunate father could feel no alleviation of his grief but from the hopes of vengeance on the murderer; of whom, however, he only learnt that he was called Sir Triamour, and had, before his last fatal encounter with Sir James, successively overthrown all the bravest knights in Christendom. But it appeared that Sir Aradas was at least an accessory to the deed; and the emperor determined to wash out the disgrace of his son's death in the blood of that monarch and of all the Arragonese. He collected the vassals of the empire, and uniting such an army as Aradas, notwithstanding his skill and bravery, was unable to oppose, overran his whole territory, and finally besieged him in his principal fortress.

Here, however, the defenders, being plentifully supplied with provisions, and guided by an experienced warrior, who understood all the advantages of his situation, were more nearly on a par with their assailants. The emperor daily led his men to the assault, and Aradas, *with guns and great stones round*, as constantly drove them back to their trenches; so that at the end of seven weeks the siege had made no visible progress. But both parties were become tired of the war. The king of Arragon sent an embassy to the imperial camp, to assert his innocence with respect to the death of Sir James, which he was ready to prove either in person, in single combat with the emperor himself, or by champions to be chosen by the two parties; and the latter proposal being readily accepted, and a day appointed for the decision of the quarrel, all hostilities were suspended. A giant, of the name of Marradas, was chosen by the emperor; and Aradas sent his messengers in every direction in search of Triamour: but they all returned without success; and the terms of the truce being nearly expired, the unfortunate Aradas prepared to submit to the fate which awaited him from the vengeance of his implacable enemy.

When Triamour was whole and sound,
And well healed of his wound,
He busked him for to fare.
"Mother," he said, with mild cheer,
"An I wist what my father were,
The less were my care."
"Son," she said, "thou shalt wete
When thou hast married that lady sweet;

Thy father thou shalt ken."
"Mother," he said, "if he will so,
Have good day; for now I go,
To do maistries, if I can."

set off, accompanied by three excellent greyhounds, and ıred from forest to forest, in chase of wild beasts and of ıs adventures, till he arrived in Arragon, after a toilsome ıy, in which his taste for danger and amusement had been gratified. Here, being in pursuit of an hart of uncommon e was suddenly espied and assaulted by a troop of thirteen rmed foresters. He attempted in vain by remonstrance, and by bribes, to prevent this interruption of his chase; they ıd on hurrying him to prison for trespassing on the royal and attacked him with such vigour that he was compelled stance. He then assaulted them in his turn, killed some; led others; put the rest to flight; resumed the pursuit of ıyhounds, two of whom were already gored by the deer; and d just in time to rescue the third by shooting the animal at bay. He then blew his horn, according to custom, in of success.

das, now hopeless of succour, had retired with his court to a ır" in this forest, in the hopes of dissipating his chagrin by ıasures of the chase; and the blast of Triamour's horn was ıtly heard in the hall, where it excited no small degree of ıhment. At the same time arrived a forester "with evil ' who reported that an intruder was just arrived in the had killed one of the king's deer, and had maimed or de- l a dozen of his game-keepers.

Good King Aradas said than,
"I have much need of such a man!
God hath him hither brought!"
The king commanded knightes three,
He said, "Go fetch that gentleman to me
That is now at his play.
Look none ill words to him ye break,
But pray him with me for to speak;
I trow he will not say nay."
Every knight his steed hent,
And lightly to the wood they went,
To seek Triamour, that child;[1]
They found him by a water side,
Where he brake the beast that tide,
That hart that was so wild.

three knights executed their commission with becoming ıy; and Triamour, having first inquired the name of the

[1] A youth trained to arms.

country, and of the monarch who governed it, readily consented to accompany them to the hall, where he was received with the most flattering distinction. He instantly recognized, in Aradas, the person to whose assistance, during his conflict with Sir James, he owed his life; and, on being questioned on his name and country, courteously reminded the king of this important obligation. Aradas was so over-joyed at finding Triamour, that he swooned three times successively; and then related to him the distresses he had undergone since their last meeting, and the conditions on which he had obtained a truce from the emperor. Triamour, of course, accepted with joy the defence of a cause which he knew to be just; Aradas, full of confidence in the vigour of his champion, was no longer solicitous about the emperor and his giant; and the court of Arragon exhibited, during the short interval which preceded the combat, a continued scene of festivity.

On the morning of this important event, Aradas conferred on Triamour the dignity of knighthood, with which he had not yet been invested, and entreated him to accept the inheritance of all those dominions which he was now preparing to defend. Both the champions were then led into the field, with the accustomed solemnities; both attested in the presence of God, the justice of their cause; and, mounting their horses, awaited in silence the signal of attack.

> Then rode they together full right,
> With sharpe spears, and swordes bright;
> They smote together sore:
> They spent speares and brake shields;
> They pounsed as fowl in the fields;
> Either foamed as doth a boar.

The contest was long and obstinate. Triamour, having accidentally killed the horse of Sir Marradas, was severely taunted by the giant for his want of address; and, indignantly springing to the ground, renewed the combat on foot. The great strength of Sir Marradas, which was seconded by considerable skill and experience, continued for some hours to render the victory doubtful; and both began to grow faint with fatigue and loss of blood: but at last Sir Triamour, recollecting that he had on that day received the honour of knighthood, suddenly recovered all his powers, and, pressing on his exhausted adversary, pierced him to the heart. The innocence of Aradas was thus finally made manifest; the emperor gave him the kiss of peace, and retired with his army; while Triamour returned in triumph with the king into the capital of Arragon.

Aradas became daily more and more attached to his deliverer, and endeavoured to fix him near his person by the offer of an immediate participation of the sovereignty; but Triamour, anxious to return into Hungary with as much expedition as the adventures

which he hoped to achieve on his way would permit, hastened to depart, after accepting, as the reward of his services, an excellent suit of armour, a sum of money, and the best horse in the royal stable.

No impediment occured on his journey till he arrived near the frontiers of Hungary, when, on entering a pass in the mountains, he met a palmer, who asked him for alms. Sir Triamour made him a most liberal present; and the pilgrim, in return, earnestly requested him to change his route, which could not but prove fatal to him, as it led to a pass guarded by two giants of unparalleled strength and ferocity. The young knight, hearing that there were only two, rejoiced in the prospect of such an adventure; took leave of the palmer; set spurs to his horse; and gave a shrill blast with his horn, to advertise the enemy of his approach.

The signal was soon answered, and two giants were discovered on a neighbouring eminence, one of whom rode forward, with his lance in arrest, to meet Sir Triamour, while the other remained behind, as disdaining to join in the attack of a single adversary. But astonished at the strength and courage of Sir Triamour, he suddenly came down to part the combatants, and to inquire the name of the doughty knight. Sir Triamour insisted on first knowing theirs, and they condescended to inform him, "that they were two of four brothers, one of whom was Marradas; that their elder brother Burlong was at that moment besieging the princess of Hungary, the mistress of a certain Triamour, the murderer of Marradas; and that they had occupied that pass in the mountains in the hope of intercepting this adventure, if he should be bold enough to attempt the rescue of fair Helen by entering the lists with Burlong." Sir Triamour, having repaid their courtesy by an equally candid avowal of his name and intentions, was instantly attacked by the two giants, both of whom he killed after a desperate conflict; and then hastened forwards to the capital of Hungary, which he found blockaded by the army of Burlong. His arrival was very opportune. The day of combat was fixed; the lists were set; Burlong, armed at all points, had already demanded the champion of Hungary; and the fair Helen made only answer,

> ——"if Triamour be alive,
> Hither will he come belive:
> God send us grace to speed!"

The giant, confident that his brothers would effectually prevent the arrival of any succour to the princess, anticipated the triumph which a few hours would ensure to him, when an unknown knight, suddenly riding up to him, challenged the lady, and defied him to single combat. The lists were instantly cleared; and the princess, observing from her tower the movements in the besieging

army, inquired of her attendants if they could recognise the stranger who thus gallantly prepared to expose his life for her deliverance.

A griffon he beareth of all blue:
An herald of arms soon him knew,
And said, anon right,
"Madame, God hath sent you succour,
For yonder is Sir Triamour
That with Burlong will fight!"

At the sound of the trumpet, the two champions rushed together, shivered their spears, and then, drawing their swords, advanced to closer combat. Victory was long undecided; but Sir Triamour, having aimed at the giant a furious blow which he artfully eluded, unfortunately lost his sword, and the heart of fair Helen sunk within her. The knight himself, not at all intimidated by the accident, calmly demanded permission to resume his weapon, that the battle might be renewed on equal terms; and Burlong promised his consent, on condition of learning the name of his adversary. But the generosity of giants is seldom commensurate with their stature. On hearing the name of Triamour, Burlong determined to kill him while it was apparently easy to do so; and rushed on the disarmed knight, reproaching him at the same time with the murder of Marradas.

Then said Burlong, "Thou it was
That slew my brother Maradas;
A fair hap thee befell!"
Sir Triamour said to him, tho,
"So have I done thy brethren two,
That on the mountain did dwell."

This avowal, accompanied by a most haughty defiance, exasperated the giant so far, that, summoning his whole strength into a single blow, he attempted to annihilate at once his insolent antagonist. But his foot slipped, and he fell to the ground. Sir Triamour instantly seized the opportunity to resume his sword, and, before Burlong could recover his legs, cut them both off at the knee. Still he continued to fight with great fury, till Sir Triamour, seizing a moment when the ventail of his helmet was accidentally raised, severed his head from his shoulders.

Now is Burlong slain,
And Triamour, with main,
Into the castle went,
To that lady that was full bright;
And at the gate she met the knight,
And in her arms she him hent.
She said, "Welcome, Sir Triamour!
Ye have bought my love full dear:

My heart is on you lent!"
Tho said all the barons bold,
"Of him we will our lands hold;"
And thereto they did assent.

ıediate preparations were made for the nuptials. Margaret mmoned to witness her son's happiness, and revealed to him ıry of his birth, to the great joy of fair Helen, who had hoped to find, in her beloved Triamour, a prince in dis- Aradas also was invited to the coronation, where he was ed for all his past sufferings by the recovery of his faithful ret, and by the pleasure of embracing as his son the hero to he owed the preservation of his life and kingdom.

And thus we leave of Triamour,
That lived long in great honour,
With the fair Elyne;
I pray God give their souls good rest;
And all that have heard this little gest,
High Heaven for to win!
God grant us all to have the grace,
Him for to see in the celestial place;
I pray you all to say Amen!

THE LYFE OF IPOMYDON.

romance is contained in MS. No. 2252 of the Harleian library in ish Museum.[1] It is perfect, and consists of two fyttes or cantos, 2 verses. Bishop Percy has noticed an early but imperfect printed once extant in the library of Lincoln cathedral.

ch and happy country of Apulia was never so rich and as during the reign of the good King Hermones, who, says ıance, "hated wrong and loved peace," from a conviction might render his neighbours very miserable, without con- ıg much to the comfort of his subjects. His queen was ınd handsome, and in consequence of their joint prayers to , as the author verily believes, had the good fortune to ıim a son and heir, whom they christened by the name of lon. The child was very beautiful, and much beloved by ıg and queen, and by the ladies, who were appointed to tend the early part of his education; after which, he was ed into the hands of a foster-father of distinguished merit Sir Tholomew.

Tholomew a clerke he toke,
That taught the child upon the boke,

[1] Printed in Weber's Metrical Romances. 1810.

Both to synge and to rede;
And after he taught him other dede.
Afterward to serve in halle,
Bothe to grete and to small;
Before the king mete to kerve,
Hye and lowe feyre to serve.
Both of howndis and hawkis game
After he taught him, all and same,
In se, in feld, and eke in ryvere;
In wodde to chase the wild dere,
And in the feld to ryde a stede,
That all men had joy of his dede.

Ipomydon had received from nature an athletic but graceful figure; considerable docility, which was increased by his respect for the good Sir Tholomew; and that decision of character, which is of infinite use to men born to command. He therefore soon excelled in all manly exercises, insomuch that none could exceed him "in casting the tree ne the stone," and had the good sense to study the arts of courtesy as much as if he had been unconscious of his superior strength and activity. Hermones was infinitely proud of his accomplished son, and anxious for an opportunity of exhibiting him to a wider circle of admirers than his own court, on common occasions, was able to furnish; for which reason he made unusual preparations for a festival which he usually held at Whitsuntide, and invited numerous guests from the most distant parts of Italy. Nor were his expectations disappointed. Ipomydon did the honours of the entertainment in such a manner as to attract universal admiration; and the female part of the company appeared generally to lament, as our author assures us, that their lords, were not so young or so handsome as the heir of Apulia.

When the important business of dining was concluded, the guests dispersed in search of their respective amusements,

Some to chambre and some to bower,
And some to the high tower;
And some in the hall stood,
And spake what hem thought good;
Men that were of that cyté
Enquered of men of other countré
Of Calabre land who was king?—

And as Ipomydon had nothing better to do, he joined this inquisitive party.

The reply made to this question was, that the king of Calabria was dead, and had left his throne to an only daughter, who was so very beautiful that her charms mocked all power of description; that, though so exquisitely fair, she was still more remarkable for the extent of her accomplishments; and that although assailed by numerous suitors, many of whom were kings, and some even em-

perors, she had determined never to bestow her hand but upon a knight who should have proved himself superior in prowess to all the knights in Christendom. Such an account very naturally gave rise to further inquiries, and to much discussion; the perfections of the heiress of Calabria, and her resolutions on the subject of matrimony, became the universal topic of conversation; and Ipomydon, who had hitherto thought little about women, began to think that life would not be worth having if he were not permitted to see the wonderful princess of Calabria.

Sir Tholomew soon perceived in his pupil an air of pensiveness and dejection, which surprised and alarmed him, and, the young man having at length confessed to him the cause of his anxiety, endeavoured to dispel it by observing that he had no cause to despair; that his personal merit was certainly not inferior to that of his rivals, however numerous they might be; and that the princess could not easily find a more advantageous match than one which should unite the kingdoms of Apulia and Calabria. Ipomydon answered, that his object at present was not to marry a woman whom he had not seen, but to see and study her character; that he wished to do this in his own way; and that unless he were gratified on this point he should assuredly die. The good-natured tutor, alarmed at this alternative, flew to the king; represented to him that his son, whose education was now perfected, was desirous of visiting foreign countries; and, after urging the reasonableness of the request, offered to accompany the prince on his travels, and to become responsible for his conduct. Having thus obtained the consent of Hermones, he returned with the account of his success to his pupil, who embraced and thanked him; and, after receiving the paternal benediction, selected a small number of attendants and proceeded to execute his project.

He had no sooner begun his march than he issued strict orders to all his retinue to conceal his name and rank, and even the country from whence he came; at the same time that he did every thing in his power to excite a curiosity which he was determined not to gratify. Himself and Sir Tholomew, on arriving near the castle of the princess, assumed dresses of the utmost magnificence; their robes were new and richly embroidered, and their mantles glittered with precious stones. Having approached the gate,

> The porter to them they gan call,
> And prayed him, "Go into the hall,
> And say thy lady gent and free,
> That comen are men of far contré,
> And, if it please her, we would her pray
> That we might eat with her to-day."

The porter, having carried this message, presently returned with a gracious answer, and the strangers were ushered into the hall, where the princess had just taken her seat at table.

Ipomydon, advancing to the lady, fell on his knees before her, and related the object of his journey:

"I am come from far land,
For speech I hear beforehand,
That your nurture and your service
Is holden of so great empryse[1];
I pray you that I may dwell here
Some of your service for to lere."

The lady, during the speech, surveyed the handsome suppliant with the most scrutinizing attention. To fill any office in her court was not, indeed, disgraceful even to persons of the most elevated rank; yet it was unusual to see a petitioner for such offices arrayed with a magnificence which her own treasury could not surpass: she therefore suspected, and the more she surveyed Ipomydon the more she was tempted to cherish the suspicion, that the avowed motive of his arrival was not the real one. She, however, readily consented to grant his request, and proposed to him the offer of cup-bearer, which he gratefully accepted; after which, respectfully saluting all the guests, he took his appointed seat amongst them.

When dinner was ended, and the table (after saying grace) removed, the newly-appointed officer rose and proceeded "to the buttery," still arrayed in his superb mantle, which now more than ever attracted the eyes of the spectators, because it was not usual to wear the mantle in performing any office to a superior:

And every man said to other there,
"Will ye see the proud squyere,
Shall serve my lady of the wine
In his mantell that is so fine?"

But Ipomydon had no sooner received the cup from the butler, than by drawing a silken lace he let fall the mantle, and desired him to accept that trifling present; with which the man ran into the hall, and, falling on his knees before the princess, humbly prayed her to assure the noble stranger of his gratitude, for which he could not find any adequate expression.

This act of ostentatious generosity produced in the assembly a general murmur of surprise and admiration, to which Ipomydon was very indifferent; but it also gained him the more valuable friendship of a young squire, named Jason, who was cousin to the princess, and much in her confidence, and did not fail of producing a considerable effect on the heart of the lady herself. His unexampled profusion, contrasted with the perfect simplicity of his deportment, and with his humility in discharging the duties of his office; the obstinate silence of his attendants, and his own apparent fear of revealing his name or rank or country, piqued her curiosity, and occupied her whole attention. She daily became more and more interested in penetrating the mystery, and at last

[1] Undertaking.

felt that much of her future happiness would depend on her finding that his birth was equal to her own.

After long thought and deliberation, she devised a scheme which could not fail of throwing some light on the subject of her solicitude. His grace and address, and the friendship with which he had inspired her cousin Jason, were strong presumptions in favour of his nobility; but these were still equivocal: if he was an expert huntsman, he must be well-born: she therefore ordered a general hunting party, and determined to watch the conduct of the stranger with unceasing attention.

Ipomydon had brought with him three greyhounds, which had been carefully bred and trained by Sir Tholomew, who now attended his pupil, and assisted in managing them.

Ipomydon with his houndes tho
Drew down both buck and doe;
More he took with houndes three
Than all that other company.
Their squyers undid her deer
Each man in his own manere.
Ipomydon a deer yede unto,
Full cunningly gan he it undo;
So fair that venyson he gan to dight,
That both him beheld squyer and knight.
The lady looked out of her pavyloun,
And saw him dight the venisoun;
Thereto she had grete dainté,
And so had all that did him see.
She saw all that he down drew;[1]
Of hunting she wist he couth enow,
And thought in her heart than,
That he was come of gentil man

The inference appeared so legitimate, that at the dinner which succeeded the chase she refused to give him the trouble of serving her, and ordered him to sit by her cousin Jason, for the purpose of viewing him more at her ease, and without exciting suspicion. Ipomydon, being perfectly aware that he was no longer quite indifferent to her,

Anon it gave him in this thought,
To look again let would he nought.
Nor no more coward thought he to be
Of his looking, than was she.

But this alarmed and displeased her; and wishing to give him an indirect lesson of caution, she affected to have detected some looks of intelligence between her cousin Jason and one of her damsels, and reproved him for the levity of his conduct, which,

[1] How he dissected and separated the different joints, &c., see Scott's Notes to Sir Tristrem, ed. 1833, p. 385.

she told him, might tend to endanger the fair reputation of the young lady. Ipomydon took the hint, but felt it as an offence:

Down he looked, and thought great shame
That Jason bare for him the blame.
Still he sat, and said no mare;
He thought to dwell no longer there.

No sooner was dinner over than he approached the princess, thanked her for the honour which she had conferred upon him by accepting his services, and requested her permission to resign his office, and to return into his own country. He then took leave of the whole court, all of whom expressed their regret at his departure, and set off with his attendants, notwithstanding the affectionate remonstrances of his friend Jason, who, after vainly trying to detain him by representing the regret and misery which his absence would occasion to the princess, no less vainly entreated to have the pleasure of accompanying him in his travels. Ipomydon, as we have seen, was inflexible in all his resolutions. On the present occasion, he probably gratified his pride at the expense of his happiness; but his mistress, angry with him because "for a word he went away," but still more angry with herself for uttering that word, was much more to be pitied. She blamed her folly,

That she should such moan make,
For a stranger mannys sake,
That no man ne wist what he was;
But yet she saide oft, "Alas!"

Ipomydon, however, had taken measures to be informed of all that passed at the court of Calabria, and had left a trusty attendant, with orders to bring him immediate intelligence of any event in which the happiness of the princess might be materially interested. He was therefore sufficiently tranquil to take an active share in all the festivities which his father prepared in honour of his return, and particularly in a magnificent tournament, where he gained every prize, and was triumphantly admitted into the order of knighthood.

In the mean time, the princess of Calabria, every day less pleased with herself, became every day less solicitous to please her subjects. Her council, having taken the matter into consideration, waited on her in a body, and requested that she would condescend to take to herself a husband, and gratify her loyal subjects by becoming the mother of a long line of princes. In reply, she thanked them for their excellent advice, announced to them her intention of remaining in a state of celibacy. The council deliberated upon this answer, and were of opinion that it was light and frivolous; for which reason, renouncing all further discussion with her, they carried their complaints to a neighbouring prince, who was her uncle, and whose name was Meleager. This prince, not being in love, was much more accessible to the excellent

ning of the Calabrian ministers; and, having promised to
n the consent of his niece to their request, repaired to her
; and, trusting more to the authority of an uncle than to the
ty of his arguments, soon overpowered her opposition. She
stipulated that the possession of her hand and of the crown
labria, instead of being bestowed by her own caprice, or by
isdom of her council, should be proclaimed as the reward of
r; that a tournament should be announced for the purpose;
a delay of six months should be allowed for the purpose of
sing all who might be disposed to enter the lists on such an
ion; and that the victor knight, whatever might be his rank,
d receive the crown without delay or opposition. To these
Meleager made no objection, and measures were taken to
ll possible publicity to the convention.
e agent of Ipomydon justly concluded that this event was of
ient importance to justify his return to his master, and
ned with all possible speed to Apulia with the intelligence.
rince immediately ordered Sir Tholomew to prepare for their
ey into Calabria; after which

He purveyd him three noble steeds,
And also three noble weeds:
That one was white as any milk;
The trappure of him was white silk.
That other was red, both stiff and stour;
The trappure was of the same colour.
Black then was that other steed;
The same colour was his weed.
Three greyhounds with him he lad,
The best that his father had;
Red, and white, and black they were.
When he was dight in this manere,
With him he took a fair may,
And went forth on his journey;
Into Seseny[1] the way they nome.

then directed Sir Tholomew to enter the city by night; to
l the armour, the horses, and the hounds, from the view of
sons whatever; and strictly to enforce on all his attendants
me silence which they had observed during their former
y: after which, taking with him only the maiden; he turned
nto the forest where he had heard the cry of hounds, and,
accosted a knight, was informed by him that it was
ger, the king of the country, who was then hunting.
don rode up to him, and, after the usual salutations
ted service in his court; which having been consented to
leager, he proceeded to modify his request by the following
ar stipulations:

[1] is difficult to guess what country adjoining to Naples can be intended.
word, which generally means Saxony

Shall dwell i
At every tur
A kiss of the
I will no mor

Meleager surveyed him
ding, from this strange pr
appearance, that the strange
who wished to reside at his
not with any view to seduce
the bargain; and, the chase
chamberlain to her majesty,
Ipomydon which could lead
annexed to his service. Thu
ing of familiarity with the ro
to improve; and his wealth
affection of their courtiers, so
favourite.

But the important tourname
self was a knight of no comm
nions, Sir Campanys and Sir
reputation by their feats of a
which numberless warriors w
the heiress of Calabria, the
nions, and the mighty prepara
were the constant theme of
alone seemed to consider the
contempt. Meleager, lost in
length formally proposed to h
the lists, at the

On the evening that preceded the ceremony Ipomydon repaired to the queen and begged a boon. "It is a long time," said he, "since my hounds have been fleshed; and I should be glad to run them at some deer to-morrow, while my lord is occupied at the tournament. Your majesty will, I hope, hold me excused, should my sport detain me in the field beyond the usual hour of dinner." The queen having readily assented, he sent for Sir Tholomew, and directed him to bring to the castle, before day-break, the white steed, the white greyhound, and the white armour. He then obtained from the porter the key of the castle, rose before dawn, sounded his horn under the windows, laced on his armour, vaulted into the saddle, and, after requesting Sir Tholomew to hunt his greyhound during his absence, and to convey the game which he should collect to an appointed spot in the forest, set spurs to his horse, and rode to a hermitage on the edge of a wood, from whence he could discern all that passed in the lists.

In the mean time, the loud blasts of his horn had awakened all the maidens in the castle, so that, when called to attend the queen, they thought it necessary to compliment her majesty on the military ardour which had so suddenly inflamed her handsome leman; adding, that they hoped soon to hail his return as victor from the tournament, and that they sincerely forgave his having awakened them so early by a very noisy prelude to his great achievements. The queen answered drily, "that though unfit for tournaments, her leman was perhaps as rationally employed;" and the maidens, abashed at finding their congratulations so unwelcome, held their peace, but seemed to lament, as Meleager had done, that the handsome knight was a coward.

The handsome knight, however, was very busily employed. Having reached the hermitage,

He looked forth and beheld;
Many a knight he saw in field;
Each to other fast gan ride,
With great spears on either side.
He took his spear, anon right,
And lepte on his steed so light;
In he came among hem alle,
Through the clouds as he had falle.

The rapidity of his charge was irresistible; knight after knight was unhorsed by him; and the lady, who surveyed the combat from her bower, and had witnessed many alternations of success and defeat in the motions of the opposite squadrons, beheld with astonishment this white figure, which seemed to pass through the ranks like a spectre, unchecked in its career, and bearing down without effort all opposition. At the conclusion of the justs, every voice proclaimed that the white knight was the victor; and

Jason, who, as the queen's favourite squire, had been employed throughout the day in carrying spears to the combatants, now courteously requested him, by her command, to repose himself in the castle, which would doubtless become, within three days, the reward of his prowess. Ipomydon, discovering himself to his old companion, replied, "Commend me to my lady; say that thus much I have done for her, but that, compelled by painful necessity I must now away to my own country." At these words he set spurs to his horse and disappeared. Jason, much grieved at the loss of his friend, conveyed the message to the lady, who swooned with vexation, tore her hair, bitterly reproached herself for her folly, and would have put an end to her life, but that she still entertained a secret hope that the "strange squyere," whatever might be his avocations, would again make his appearance on the succeeding day.

Ipomydon now hastened to the place at which he had appointed Sir Tholomew to meet him, delivered to him his horse and armour, received from him in return a plentiful supply of venison, which the white greyhound had pulled down in the course of the day, and repaired with it to the castle of Meleager. The game was displayed with much ostentation, and after supping most voraciously, he exclaimed, with an air of triumph, that he had sped much better at his chace than the king his master at the tournament. Soon after this a messenger, dispatched by Meleager, brought an account of the wonderful feats of arms achieved by the white knight; to which Ipomydon replied by an account of the exploits of his white greyhound, whom he pronounced to be superior in strength and swiftness to any in the possession of his majesty, and requested that he might have leave to send some choice pieces of venison as a proof of his veracity. The queen, and all her court were marvellously pleased with this sally, and they almost began to doubt whether the knight's want of courage was not compensated by his excellent talent for buffoonery.

The next day exhibited a repetition of nearly the same scene, excepting that Ipomydon was mounted on a bay horse, and clad in red armour. Having recognized his friend Jason, who had on that morning been knighted, and took his share in the medley, he enabled him to *gain his spurs* with great distinction; leaving the young knight to repell the attacks of common adversaries, but taking to himself all those who from their superior strength and skill might have stopped his career of glory. The address with which he performed this difficult task was so conspicuous, that the red knight was thought to have eclipsed the glory of the white. Again he was solicited by Jason to retire to the castle: "For," said his friend,

"I wote thou shalt be lord here,
For I know none that is thy peer,

Save, yesterday, the white knight;
But he is out of land y-dight!"

"Nay, Jason, my true fere,
Thou shalt see that I am here,
But greet well my lady dear,
For her to-day have I been here.
The which, I say, withouten fail,
Will me turn to great travayl;
And many a horse shall I ride to dede[1],
Ere I come there that me must need!
For all my land I lose for aye,
But I be there by a certain day!"

This speech was followed, as on the day before, by tender remonstrances on the part of Jason, by obstinacy on the part of Ipomydon, and by the bitter lamentations of his mistress. The knight also repeated with equal success his old joke, saying to Meleager's messenger,

"Commend me to my lord so dear,
And say that Gager, my red greyhound,
Much deer hath brought this day to ground;
I had more joy at his running
Than to stand and stare and see the justing!"

The third day, which was to decide the fate of the princess of Calabria, called forth, of course, all the mightiest combatants. Ipomydon, still appearing to amuse himself with the chase, again repaired to the hermitage, from which he issued on a black steed, and clad in black armour. His first adversary was a champion of great strength dressed in red armour, who was mistaken by the princess, and by all the spectators, for the victor of the preceding day; but Ipomydon instantly brought him to the ground, and, seizing his horse, led it off in triumph to the extremity of the lists. He next assaulted Sir Camys, and was equally successful. Sir Campanys was a more formidable adversary, and at their first shock both knights shattered their spears without effect; but the second gave the victory to Ipomydon. Meleager, incensed at the defeat of his two companions, spurred forward to revenge them, and, attacking the unknown knight from behind, wounded him in the left arm; upon which turning round he courteously said,

"As thou art kind, gentil and free,
Abide and just a course with me,
And I forgive this vilainye."
The king said, "Thereto grant I."[2]

The result was, that his majesty's horse was presently led off to keep company with those of the red knight, of Camys, and of

[1] Death. [2] I agree thereto.

Campanys; and, there being no more competitors capable of contesting the prize, it was finally adjudged to the black knight.

Jason, to whom he again revealed himself, was more disappointed than ever at being unable to induce him to take possession of a kingdom which he had gained, and to console a beauty who adored him, and whom his absence would reduce to despair; but his remonstrances were still in vain; Ipomydon disappeared, and returned as before, to the castle of Meleager with the prey acquired by his black greyhound. For the third time, also, he repeated his injunctions to the messenger to convey his respects to the king,

"And say, my black greyhound Gilmyn
To-day hath borne him well and fine;
For he hath take many a beast,
The greatest that was in the forest."

But whilst he was carving the venison, the wound in his arm suddenly opened, and bled so plentifully as to alarm the tenderness of the queen, to whom he thus related the supposed cause of his hurt:

"Forsooth, madam, I shall you say;
I let run at a deer to day,
My palfrey I pricked after so fast,
That he stumbled, and me down cast.
At that time I took this harm:
A stub[1] smote me through the arm,
And that was, for I should say,
The gree[2] of the field I had to-day.
So they laughed at him that night,
That some might not sit upright.

The queen now requested that he would accompany her on the following day to the ceremony of *challenging the prize;* but he answered, that having absented himself from the lists, he did not wish to attend the subsequent challenge; and that, besides, he had just received some advices from home which compelled him, after thanking her majesty for all her kindness, to solicit her permission to depart. This separation from her *leman* was very painful to the queen, who spared no pains to induce him to stay; but he was as usual, inflexible, and, taking with him the maiden, whom he had brought, repaired to his inn in the city, sent for his host, and gave him his final directions about his horses. "I am," said he, "the person who appeared at the late tournament in the successive characters of the white, the red, and the black knight, and who won, on the last day, the four steeds which you see before you. My wish is, that you go to the challenging, that you place, on this my white horse a person clad in my white armour, and that you publicly present both horse and armour to King Meleager, telling him that his own knight, the queen's leman, humbly offers

[1] An old root or stump. [2] The prize.

him this present, and wishes that every hair of the horse were of gold or silver, that it might be more worthy of his acceptance. My bay horse and red armour you will present to the queen his wife, my noble mistress, with a similar message. The black horse, with the appropriate armour, I send to Sir Campanys the bravest of my competitors in the tournament. The king's own horse you will present to the heiress of Calabria, and that of Sir Campanys to her cousin Jason. I beg you to accept for yourself the horse of the other red knight, which you will ride to the ceremony." After repeating several times the precise words in which he wished the several messages to be delivered, he bestowed a magnificent reward on his host, and departed.

All the noble persons to whom these presents were directed, accepted them with gratitude, and expressed their admiration for the eccentric but truly heroic character, who seemed equally eager to court danger and to escape from that renown which is the usual incentive to enterprise. But there was one of his antagonists to whom he had sent no present, and whose horse he had reserved for his own use: this was Sir Camys; and he could not have easily found a knight of more arrogance, or more disposed to be affronted, than the person whom he distinguished by this mortifying omission. But not wishing to avow the real cause of his indignation, Sir Camys pretended to be angry with the knight for departing against the wishes of the queen, and swore to bring him back either by persuasion or by force.

Ipomydon had been so thoroughly fatigued by the exertions of the last three days, that he was unable to travel with much expedition; and he had advanced but a little way into the forest, when, stopping his attendants, and declaring that he must refresh himself by a short repose, he dismounted, laid his head on his maiden's lap and almost instantly fell asleep. But he had not rested above a quarter of an hour, when the maiden was alarmed by the appearance of a knight armed at all points, who approached them at full speed, and appeared determined to prevent their further progress. She hastily wakened her lord, and he was doing his best to shake off his slumber, when Sir Camys thus addressed him:

"Traitour! thou diddest dishonour,
When thou brakest the queenys bower,
And toke her maiden and my stede!
Again to court I will thee lead.
Arise, Traitour! I bid thee;
To court thou shalt again with me."

Ipomydon answered this brutal speech in terms of the greatest courtesy: but gave Sir Camys to understand that he was naturally disinclined to do anything on compulsion; that he could not return to court because his journey lay in an opposite direction,

that, if he were less sleepy he should be in a great hurry; and that it would be barbarous to carry an altercation any further with a man who had so little leisure to dispute the point. The moderation of the drowsy knight had, however no effect on his angry antagonist. He therefore rubbed his eyes, laid hold of his spear, mounted his horse, took his distance, charged Sir Camys at full speed, and threw him over the crupper of his horse with such violence that his arm was broken in the fall. He then ordered his attendants to seize his steed; to mount him on the worst sumpter horse in their troop, with his face to the animal's tail, and his hands tied behind him; and to escort him back to the court, which was at no great distance, where his reception might possibly cure him of his arrogance. Having given these summary orders, our knight again went to sleep, and met with no second interruption.

The unfortunate Sir Camys, bursting with vexation, writhing with pain from his broken arm, and not a little annoyed by the retrograde mode of travelling which he now tried for the first time, passed through the shouting multitudes who filled the streets of the city to the castle-gate, where he was immediately admitted by the porter, and then conducted by Sir Jason, who held the horse's bridle, through the great hall, where the whole court was assembled, to Meleager, who with great gravity requested him to relate all the circumstances of his adventure. The humbled knight, compelled to obey the orders of his sovereign, and to become the historian of his own disgrace, could now find no refuge for vanity but in exaggerating the invincible force of his antagonist—

"Though all the knightes in the hall
Come to him, both great and small,
He would of them give no thing,
But if it were of you, Sir king!"
Then they loughe all in same,[1]
And at his harm had good game.
There was none in that place
But they were glad of that case.
Thus Camys hath his service quit,
And of Ipomydon here is a fytte.

Canto II.

Ipomydon, continuing his journey, was met by a deputation of his people who had been long in search of him, and who notified to him the death of his good father King Hermones. He therefore hastened his march; and, having made a rapid progress through his dominions to receive the oaths of fealty from his subjects, evinced his filial piety by ordering a magnificent funeral

[1] Laughed all together

for his father, causing numberless masses to be sung in all the churches, and distributing alms to the poor in such abundance, as to prove that he inherited the virtues together with the power of his excellent predecessor.

The next object of his attention was the queen his mother, who found, in the kind and dutiful demeanour of her son, the best compensation that could be afforded to her for the loss of an affectionate husband, and repaid him by the most unbounded confidence. Here it may be proper to observe that, during the turbulent ages in which this history is placed, the persons of young and beautiful females were often exposed to manifold hazards, so that the reader must not be scandalized by the discovery, that the tender mother of Ipomydon had afforded an example of such casualties.

—— it befell upon a day
The queen to her son gan say,
In privity, and in counsail,
"Thou hast a brother, withouten fail,
Privily gotten me upon,
Ere I was wedded to any mon.
But hastily he was done fro me,
I ne wot if he alive be,
But he me sent, this ender[1] year,
A rich ring of gold full clear;
An ever he any brother had,
That I should give it him, he bade;
That where he come, among high or low,
By that ring he should him know.
Than take this ring, my son, of me;
In what country that he be,
Who that knoweth this ilke ring,
He is thy brother, without lesing!"

Ipomydon accepted the ring, and promised to spare no pains in searching for its original proprietor.

Soon after this, the principal barons of Apulia proposed to him that he should issue orders for his coronation; but this he declined for the present, and satisfied himself with appointing as his lieutenant his uncle, Sir Piers of Apulia, a knight of a middle age of approved valour, and distinguished by an inflexible love of justice. With regard to himself, he modestly said that he had not yet sufficiently proved his prowess; but in fact he wished to be disengaged for the purpose of going in quest of his brother, after having previously rescued the heiress of Calabria, who was now in greater danger than ever.

A duke dwelleth Calabre beside,
A stout man and of great pride.

[1] Last year.

He was mighty and of great powere:
Men dreaded him both far and near;
His name was Duke Geron;
Of Sesseny land he was baron.

This formidable duke had convinced himself that the possession of the beautiful heiress of Calabria would add much to his pleasures, and that her ample territory would form a very agreeable addition to his dominions; for which reason he had signified to the lady his intention of marrying her, if she chose to accept his hand, or of destroying every man, woman, and child, in Calabria, if she rejected his offer. From his mode of courtship we may infer that he did not think his person very seducing; and the lady, who had some reasons for believing her lover to be the bravest as well as the handsomest knight in the world, dismissed the duke's ambassadors with a most contemptuous refusal, and prepared to defend herself as well as she could; while her ferocious suitor collected a formidable army, and prepared to carry his threats into immediate execution. Such was the state of affairs, as reported to Ipomydon by the emissary whom he had again left behind him after his last expedition to Calabria.

Instead of preparing to meet his rival with the military armaments of a mighty monarch, our hero had recourse to one of his usual devices:

Right unseemly, in quaint manere,
He him dight, as ye shall hear.
A barber he called, withouten more,
And shave him, both behind and before,
Quaintly indented, out and in;
And also he shore half his chin:
He seemed a fool, that quaint sire,
Both by head and by attire.
Armour he took that was rustye,
And horsed him on an old rouncy[1];
An helm as black as any pan;
A crooked spear he took him than.
When that he was thus dight,
He seemed ill a doughty knight.

Thus fantastically accoutred, he set off alone to the court of Meleager, suddenly burst into the hall with the gestures of a madman, and with apparent awkwardness shivered his spear so that the splinters were scattered upon the table. Both king and queen were delighted at the arrival of the whimsical and unexpected visitor. "Fool, go to meat," was the hospitable exclama-

[1] A hackney horse. See other examples of the term in Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 694.

tion of both; but the fool would not set down to table till he had exacted, as a boon, that he should be permitted to take the first adventure which should offer. A request apparently so unimportant was granted without difficulty, and the guests were in expectation of receiving infinite amusement from their fool, when a damsel mounted on a white mule, and accompanied by a dwarf, entered the hall and rode up to Meleager.

This damsel was an envoy from the princess of Calabria, who sent her to request the aid of her uncle against the odious Duke Geron, who had found little difficulty in dissipating the effeminate troops of Calabria, and now actually besieged her in her citadel. Meleager, replied, that Sir Campanys, whom alone he could have trusted as a champion capable of facing the redoubtable Geron, was now absent, with all his best knights, on a distant expedition, and that he had no one calculated to undertake the adventure. At this instant the fool started up, and claimed the king's promise; and though the damsel indignantly disclaimed such an assistant, he persevered in asserting his right, and declared himself ready to fight Sir Geron. She turned away and departed; but the fool soon overtook her, and became her faithful though unwelcome companion. She ordered the dwarf to pitch her tent; she took her repast with him, but would not offer a morsel to the fool: fortunately the fool had dined, and paid no attention to her discourse. But her dinner was shortly interrupted by a still more disagreeable visitant. One of Duke Geron's warriors rode up to the tent, hailed the damsel as his mistress, and without further ceremony proceeded to treat her as such. It should seem that the duke himself being an enemy to much form on such occasions, all his followers had abridged as much as possible the minutiæ of courtship. But the fool interfered; and, after a short verbal altercation, seized a piece of a tent-pole, laid the knight with one blow dead at his feet, and bestowed upon the dwarf his horse and armour, reserving only his enemy's spear, which seemed to be a strong one, for some future occasion.

They then resumed their journey; but at their next resting-place they were assaulted by a second adventurer, as amorous as the former, but not more fortunate. Being compelled to just with the fool before he could obtain possession of the lady, he was pierced through the heart by the spear of his apparently contemptible adversary, and his spoils were again given to the dwarf, who began to think that madness and great military skill were more compatible than he had hitherto imagined.

Again they resumed their journey; and travelling till near the close of evening, pitched their tent, and hoped to escape all further interruption; but they were disappointed.

Right as they sat and made them glad,
There came a knight, as the devil him bade;

He was the duke's brother Geron;
All was black that he had on,
Both his horse and his weed:
To the maid he gan him speed,
And said, "Sithe I find you here,
Ye shall be my leman dear."
The fool said, "Nay, not so,
Another she hath ta'en her to;
That I am that thou seest here;
If thou her buy, she is too dear."
"Fool," he said, "thou bourdest grete[1];
With my spear I shall thee beat;
Her time foully hath she sped,
If she should lie with thee in bed!"
The fool said, "Twice I have her bought;
With thy chiding thou gettest her nought:
If thou her have, thou must her buy
A penny dearer than ever did I."
There was no longer to abide,
But either of them to other gan ride;
The fool met the knight so
That his back brast on two.
With that stroke he him slew,
And his armour off he drew;
Anon he took the knightys steed,
And armed him in his weed.

This change of armour produced such a difference in his whole appearance, that the damsel, in whom his astonishing strength and activity had already excited some suspicions, examined him again with great attention, and at length convinced herself that he could be no other than the "strange squire." She now lamented the discourtesy with which she had hitherto treated him, and wished to make amends by an excess of kindness. They all retired early to rest; and the dwarf without loss of time, began to snore; at which signal the damsel rose, and approaching the knight, made him a very unexpected and unreserved declaration of love, adding that, though in the service of the princess of Calabria, she was not less nobly born, scarcely less rich, equally handsome, and of a more affectionate disposition than that lady, for whom he had suffered so much; and ready to accompany him in all his fortunes, without giving him the trouble of killing any more dukes or knights for her sake. But the knight, who had assumed the disguise of a madman for his own purposes, was not disposed to forego so suddenly the privileges of his character. Feigning to be plagued by a disagreeable dream, he began to ges-

[1] Mockest much.

ticulate with such violence, whilst he uttered the most incoherent ejaculations, that the love-sick damsel, after receiving a few bruises from his elbows, and narrowly escaping a violent contusion on her nose, was compelled to abandon her purpose, and leave him to his slumbers.

As it was necessary, for the purpose of returning to the citadel undiscovered, that she should set off before daybreak, she took leave of the knight, after inquiring whether he was still disposed to fulfil his promise to Meleager, and undertake the battle; to which he answered, still in his assumed character, that he possibly might, but that after surveying Duke Geron in the morning he should determine whether he liked his looks. This doubtful message, therefore, she conveyed to the princess, who, deriving little consolation from it, now employed herself in accelerating the preparations which she had made for her escape from a citadel which she was no longer able to defend.

Duke Geron, aware that his success depended very much on his availing himself of the general alarm which the rapidity of his inroad had inspired, and that the allies of the princess might in a short time come to her assistance, in such numbers as to compel him to raise the siege, spared no pains to intimidate the garrison into a speedy surrender. He had advanced to the gate of the citadel, and had threatened all the inhabitants with indiscriminate massacre, unless the princess were delivered to him, or a champion sent out to combat him in the field, when he discovered a knight, whom he mistook for his brother, advancing towards him, and suddenly heard himself addressed by a voice to which he was a perfect stranger, and in a tone by no means fraternal.

"What art thou that makest this cry,
And at this gate so great mastrye?"[1]
"I am," he said, "lord of all herein;
For I am sekyr this maid to win,
And will do so ere I hence gon;
That other husband getteth she none!"
Ipomydon said, "That thou shalt miss,
For all mine own that lady is,
And full long she hath be so;
Therefore, I rede thee, hence go!
I will her defend from all men."
The duke answered bitterly then.
"Traitour!" he said, "thou art another;
I weened thou hadst been my brother;
His steed thou hast, his armour lo;
Thou hast him slain I trow also."

[1] Conflict.

"That I him slew I gainsay nought;
Thee so to serve have I thought."
With that word, withouten lie,
Fast together gan they hie,
That their speares all to-brast;
They drew their swerdes and fought fast.
The lady lay in a high tower,
And saw between them all the stour;
But she ne wist which for her did fight,
For they in like weed were dight.

We have seen that Geron himself had mistaken his antagonist for his brother; and the princess, very naturally supposing that the odious duke was the most formidable knight in the world excepting the strange squire her lover, no less naturally concluded, when either knight appeared to gain a visible advantage, that he was Geron. Ipomydon, however, though he had never before encountered such a formidable adversary, obtained at length a decided superiority; and Geron, staggering under the weight of a blow which his helmet had resisted, but which had nearly dislocated his neck, sued for mercy, promised to evacuate Calabria, to repay all the damages occasioned by his troops, to become the vassal of his conqueror, and to yield him an annual tribute of a thousand pounds of gold. Promises of this kind were held so sacred by the laws of chivalry, that Ipomydon, after assenting to the conditions, hastened to the gate of the citadel, where he expected to be received with open arms, and was much surprised at finding that neither threats nor entreaties could obtain him admittance. In fact his mistress was no longer there.

Beside the castle where in was the cyre,[1]
Renneth a river long and fair,
With shippes and sayles manifold,
Their foremes[2] were of fine gold, &c.

In short, prepossessed that the victor knight must be the tyrant whom she dreaded, she had escaped at one gate when her defender approached the other, embarked without delay, and was hastening down the river as fast as her sails, her oars, and the current could carry her, whilst Ipomydon was vainly remonstrating with the keepers of the gate, who, having heard from their mistress that he must be Duke Geron, were determined to believe that he could be no other person, and were confirmed in their obstinacy by observing the departure of the hostile army, without whose aid it was obviously impossible that he should force an entrance.

Fortunately, while the princess was retreating so precipitately

[1] Heiress. [2] Forms or images? Statues were used to decorate not only the heads, but the sterns of ships also, and were usually gilded.

down the river, Sir Campanys and the rest of her uncle's knights were marching along its banks to her assistance. They hailed the vessels, and with some difficulty obtained a parley, in which the frightened princess gave them the best information in her power concerning the adventures of her damsel and the fool, and concerning the combat in which one of the knights had been victorious, and respecting her flight, which she had valiantly deferred till the very last moment. Sir Campanys, who was not at all frightened, could not help remarking to her a circumstance in her narrative which required further explanation; namely, that being in possession of a strong castle, defended by a numerous garrison, she had at length fled from it on the approach of a single knight. He therefore conjured her to return, and promised to clear up the mystery, and even to bring her the head of Geron, if it should appear that he had been the victor in the late combat.

The lady now consented to go back: but, on approaching the castle, kept her vessels in the middle of the river, whilst Sir Campanys and his knights rode forward to the gate, where they beheld a knight whose armour led them to think that the fears of the princess were well founded.

Sir Campany's said in this manere;—
"What art thou that standest here?
Tell me why thou makest this din,
And what thou wouldest have herein?"
He said, "My leman that I wan;
I will not leave her for no man!"

Sir Campanys now insisted on his retiring immediately, on pain of being treated like a common robber, and attacked by himself and all his friends at the same time. Ipomydon was completely confounded by this unexpected outrage, and almost fancied himself in a dream; but at length, seeing that Campanys prepared to carry his threats into execution, drew his sword, set his back against a buttress of the wall, and defended himself with such vigour as to keep his assailants at bay, till one of his gauntlets being chopped off, he was forced to grasp his sword in his naked hand, on which was displayed the ring presented to him by his mother.

The sight operated like a talisman upon Sir Campanys, who instantly dropped the point of his sword and demanded a parley, to the great relief of all the combatants, who were by this time exceedingly tired, and after some difficulty in adjusting a point of great importance in chivalry, namely, the right of putting the first question, they at length came to an explanation, by which it appeared that Sir Campanys was the long lost brother of Ipomydon, and that Ipomydon was the strange squire; the white, red,

and black knight; the chamberlain of Meleager's queen; the fool; and the reputed brother of Duke Geron.

With this stock of important intelligence the knights repaired to the river-side; and, though unable to communicate, at such a distance, a very circumstantial account of what had passed, contrived, by the joint aid of bawling and of gesticulation, to explain that they were the bearers of very good news, and that it related to the "strange squire." The princess, now cured of her fears, ordered out a boat, threw herself into it, urged the mariners to convey her with the utmost possible dispatch, and seeing her lover on the bank,

She leaped out of the boat on hie,
Into the water that he stood by;
And he in after, wonder fast,
That up he gat her at the last.
When they come unto the lond,
Ipomydon took her by the hond,
And told her there, withouten fail,
Her love had caused him great travail.

He then related very modestly and succinctly his various exploits, to which she listened with delight and attention, and abstained from swooning with pleasure till he had concluded his whole narrative; after which, and a great deal of kissing and embracing, attended with more joy than the author of the romance will undertake to describe, they repaired together to the castle, and sent out "letters of great noblay" to King Meleager, to the emperor, to Sir Piers of Apulia, and to all the archbishops, bishops and nobles of the adjoining country, to attend the solemnization of their nuptials. This splendid assembly being convened,

On the morrow, when it was day,
They busked them, as I you say,
Toward the church, with game and glee,
To make that great solempnité.
The arch-bishop of that land
Wedded them, I understand.
When it was done, as I you say,
Home they went without delay.
By that they come to the castel,
Their meat was ready every del.
Trumpes to meat gan blow tho,
Claryons and other minstrels mo.
Tho they washed and went to meat,
And every lord took his seat.
When they were set, all the rout,
Minstrels blew then all about,
Till they were served with pride
Of the first course that tide.

The service was of great array,
That they were served with that day.
Thus they ate, and made them glad,
With such service as they had.
When they had dined, as I you say,
Lordis and ladies yede to play;
Some to tables, and some to chess,
With other games more and less.

To conclude, Ipomydon distributed, at the end of the festival, considerable largesses to the minstrels and others, who had assisted in amusing the company; and bestowed on his brother Sir Campanys the investiture of Apulia, with the reserve of a single earldom, which was alienated in favour of Sir Tholomew: he also conferred on his respectable and apparently aged foster-father "a maiden his lief to be;" and, with more seeming propriety, gave the hand of another maiden, together with the island of Crete as a marriage portion, to his young friend and companion Sir Jason. These acts of generosity maintained and increased the reputation which he had already acquired, and the remainder of his life was spent in tranquillity and happiness.

SIR EGLAMOUR OF ARTOYS.

The following abstract is taken from a copy in Garrick's collection, which was printed "at London in Forster lane, at the sygne of the Hartes horne, by John Walley." Another printed copy is preserved in the Bodleian. There are three MSS. of this romance, one of which is in the Cotton Library, Calig. A. xii.; another in the Public Library Cambridge, Ff. ii. 38; and a third in Bishop Percy's folio.[1]

The writer tells us in the last stanza, that "in romaunce this chronicle is;" so that Ritson can have had no good reason to doubt its being a translation, merely because the French original has not yet been discovered. The same remark will apply to Sir Tryamour.—It contains 214 stanzas of six lines.

At the time when the country of Artois, since incorporated with France, was governed by its native sovereigns, there reigned there a count named Sir Prinsamour, whose court, though neither so magnificent nor so numerous as those of more powerful monarchs, afforded an excellent seminary for the instruction of youth in the

[1] The curious romance of Torrent of Portugal is founded on the same tale as Sir Eglamour. The copy of the latter in the Cambridge MS. was printed in the Thornton Romances, ed. Halliwell.

courtesy and accomplishments of chivalry. Prinsamour had a daughter named Crystabell, the intended heiress of his dominions, of whose beauty and accomplishments he was deservedly proud, and whom he hoped to place on one of the principal thrones in Europe. But Crystabell was not ambitious. Educated in her father's court, she was naturally partial to its inhabitants, and among these there was a young knight to whom she was more partial than to the rest, either because he was handsomer, or because at the numerous tournaments which Prinsamour had ordered to be proclaimed in her name, and which had drawn together a large concourse of strangers, he had uniformly been victorious. He was a native of her father's dominions, and his name was Sir Eglamour.

The young knight, on his part, had always heard that Crystabell was the most charming of her sex; and he had no sooner beheld her than he became more confirmed in this opinion. To please her had been, from this moment, the great object of his life; with this purpose always in his view, he had made such a progress in the exercises of chivalry as to be considered nearly invincible; and his superiority was viewed without envy, because his prowess, generally manifested at the expense of strangers, cast a reflected lustre on all the knights of Artois.

By degrees the princess had acquired the habit of considering him as "her knight;" and others had insensibly given him the same appellation, which, though apparently unimportant, because he was her father's subject, was infinitely grateful to him, and naturally led to that sort of familiarity which enabled him to discover that he was not considered with indifference by his mistress.

Having proceeded thus far, he naturally wished to advance a step further, and to obtain the advice and assistance of a confidant. He therefore had recourse to his trusty chamberlain; but the chamberlain gave him no encouragement. He observed that,

"The man that heweth over-high,
Some chip falleth in his eye;"

and that a simple knight, with no property but that which he had acquired by his sword, and without an acre of territory, could not, without madness, pretend to the hand of a princess, whose father, however fond of her and desirous of promoting her happiness, was still more anxious for her further elevation.

Eglamour sighed and said no mair,
But to his chamber gan he fare,
That richly was wrought;
To God his hand he held up soon;
;Lord!" he said, "grant me a boon,
As thou on rood me bought!
The erle's daughter, fair and free,
That she may my wife be!

For she is most in my thought:
That I may wed her to my wife,
And in joy to lead our life!
From care then were I brought."

It was with perfect simplicity and sincerity of heart, that the good knight addressed his Creator in the same terms which he would have employed to solicit a favour from a feudal superior; and he evinced at least the extent of his care and anxiety, by fretting himself into a violent fever, which disabled him from appearing the next day at the table of his sovereign. His absence of course was noticed by the princess, who anxiously inquired after the health of "her knight;" and who, we may suppose, was not a little pleased at the positive injunction which she received from her father, to repair immediately after dinner to the chamber of Sir Eglamour, and to examine the nature of his malady. Perhaps, too, she was not much displeased at receiving from the sick man a formal declaration of his passion, to which she listened with much patience, and answered, that if he could obtain the consent of the parent whom it was her duty to obey, she should feel no disinclination to such a marriage.

Sir Eglamour was restored to new life by this favourable answer. He bestowed a magnificent present on the two damsels who accompanied his mistress, and was rewarded for his generosity by a kiss from her lips, and by an avowal of her affection, after which she repaired to the count, and informed him that the knight was so far recovered as to be able to hunt on the following day; and Prinsamour, rejoiced at this sudden and unexpected cure, declared his resolution of accompanying the knight in his diversion.

In returning from this chase, Sir Eglamour ventured to make his proposal, to the great surprise of the count, who had not hitherto suspected the secret motive which had induced his daughter to reject with scorn the addresses of all her other suitors, and now ardently wished to procure the destruction of the young knight, who, whilst he lived, could not fail of disappointing all the expectations which he had founded on the advantageous marriage of Crystabell. He, however, dissembled his indignation, and calmly replied, that the possessor of his daughter must purchase her by accomplishing three several feats of arms, each of which would expose the candidate for her hand to the most imminent danger, but that the reward of success would be not only the hand of Crystabell, but the immediate possession of the whole territory of Artois. Sir Eglamour was transported with joy. He was only impatient to be informed of the achievement which he was required in the first instance to accomplish, and declared that he would be ready to set off on the following day.

"There is," said the count, "at a short distance to the westward,

a forest of noble trees belonging to a most terrible giant named Sir Maroke. In a part of this forest, which is inclosed with a lofty wall, and more particularly reserved for his amusements, are three harts remarkable for their transcendant size and swiftness. To determine on chacing one of these animals is to undertake a single combat with the dreadful Sir Maroke. Consider whether you have firmness enough for such an enterprise." Sir Eglamour did not hesitate, but having promised to kill the giant, hastened to his mistress, and with transports of joy informed her of what had passed.

"Good sir," she said, "be merry and glad!
For a worse journé ye never had
In no Christian countré!
Sir, if you be on hunting found,
I shall you give a good greyhound,
That is dun as a doe;
For as I am a true gentilwoman,
There was never deer that he at ran,
That might scape him fro.
Also a swerde I give thee,
That was found in the sea,
Of such know I no mo.
If ye have hap to keep it wele,
There is no helm of iron and steel
But it would carve in two."
Eglamour kissed that lady gent,
He took his leave and forth he went,

and having reached the giant's park, followed the wall till he arrived at the gate, and entered.

The trees, which were principally cypress-trees, appeared to be as fine as he had any reason to expect; the deer, of whose size and beauty he was a much better judge, were the largest that he had ever seen; and the dun greyhound soon convinced him, by pulling down the choicest of the three famous harts, that the princess had not exaggerated his merits. Sir Eglamour now sounded his horn with such power that the giant, though a very good sleeper, and lodged at a considerable distance, was instantly roused, and hastened to the gate by which the intruder had entered, with a full determination of sacrificing him to the manes of his slaughtered venison. The knight in the mean time had deliberately *undone* (carved) the animal, blowing *the prize* at intervals upon his horn, and arriving at the gate, very civilly saluted the giant, and requested leave to pass through with his prey. Sir Maroke answered in very coarse language, and seizing his club, aimed a blow at his opponent's head. Sir Eglamour at the same moment drew his sword, the brightness of which not only dazzled the eyes of the giant, but totally deprived him of sight.

Howbeit he lost his sight,
He fought with Sir Eglamour the knight
Two dayes and more,
Till the third day at prime;[1]
Sir Eglamour waited well his time,
And to the heart him bore.
Thorough Goddis might, and his knife,
There the gyaunte lost his life;
Fast he began to roar.
For certain sooth, as I you say,
When he was meten[2] there he lay,
He was fifteen feet and more.

Sir Eglamour, having cut off his head, carried it together with the venison to his sovereign, and was received on his return with the acclamations of the whole court. The venison was pronounced to be the fairest and fattest that had ever been seen; and it was the general opinion that the head of Sir Maroke was the largest and ugliest head that could be imagined, and that even its elevation to the top of the high shoulders on which it had been originally placed, must have been insufficient to soften the natural deformity of its features.

After three days passed between travelling and hard fighting Sir Eglamour required some refreshment; but no sooner was his strength recruited, than Sir Prinsamour despatched him on a new adventure, ordering him to bring away, from the distant land of *Satyn*, the head of a prodigious boar, whose tusks were a yard long, and who had devoured a large proportion of the inhabitants of that ill-fated country.

The knight departed, and travelled during a fortnight by land, and during a second fortnight by sea, so that if we knew the direction in which he moved, it would be easy to ascertain the situation of the land of Satyn; but, in the meantime, we must be satisfied with the consolation of knowing that he readily found the boar who was the object of his journey, whose lair was surrounded by dead bodies, many of which were cased in beautiful armour.

Sir Eglamour, having arrived in the evening, thought fit to spend the night in the skirts of the forest, and proceeded, a little before sun-rise, in search of the monster, who was then returning from the sea, where he had just taken *his morning's draught*. On discovering the knight, he began to whet his long tusks, and then rushed on to the attack, in which he gained the first advantage, and killed his adversary's horse, whilst his own tough hide remained perfectly uninjured by the spear. But Sir Eglamour,

[1] The first quarter of the artificial day, reckoning from sunrise.
[2] Meted, *i. e.*, measured.

soon recovered his legs, and, drawing his excellent sword, had the pleasure to find that its edge made some impression on his adversary, though the enormous length of his tusks made it impossible to close with him. This battle, therefore, like that which our hero had sustained against the giant, lasted also two days and a half, after which the knight, having gained a favourable opportunity of approaching the monster, made a terrible blow at his neck, and severed his head from his body.

Some time before the close of this long conflict, the boar had frequently yelled so loud, that the king of Satyn, who was hunting in the forest, attended by fifteen knights in complete armour, dispatched one of them to discover the cause of this unusual outcry; and this spectator arrived just in time to witness the termination of the combat, the account of which he carried back to the king, together with a correct description of the victor's armorial bearings.

"Of gold he beareth a seemly sight;
A steed of azure, and armed knight,
To batayle as he should gon.
And on the crest upon the head, is
A lady made in her likeness:
His spurs are sable each one."
The king said, "So mote I the,
Those riche armes will I see,"
And thither he took the way;
By that time Sir Eglamoure,
Had overcome the sharpe stoure;
And overthwart the boar lay.
The king said, "God rest with thee!"
"My lord," said Eglamour, "welcome be ye!
Of peace now I thee pray;
I have so foughten with the boar
That certainly I may no more;
This is the thirde day."

All the company disclaimed any intention of molesting him, and expressed their admiration of his prowess, assuring him that the wicked beast from whom he had just freed them had sometimes destroyed no less than forty brave men in a day. The king added, that, for the love of the stranger, he would take his dinner on the spot; and the cloth being laid, Sir Eglamour was plentifully regaled with venison and rich wine, and invited to spend a few days at the court of Satyn, for the purpose of recovering from his fatigue. But there remained a most important business to dispatch, which was to cut up the boar; and for this purpose it became necessary to request the aid of Sir Eglamour, because the tough hide of the animal defied the sharpest knives that could be found in the country of Satyn.

Eglamour to the boar gan gon,
And clave him by the rigge-bone,[1]
That joy it was to see;
"Lordings," he said, "great and small,
Give me the head, and take you all;
For why, that is my fee."
Against even the king did dyght
A bath for that gentle knight,
That was of herbes good:
Sir Eglamour therin lay,
Till it was light of day,
That men to masses yode.[2]

By means of this long-protracted bath, Sir Eglamour was perfectly restored to all his powers, and became enabled to reward his kind entertainer by a service of great importance. The boar, it seems, was connected, by the closest ties of friendship, with a huge and ugly giant named Sir Manas, own brother to the hideous Sir Maroke, whom Eglamour had deprived of his head; and this giant had thought fit to fall in love with the charming Ardanata, daughter of King Edmond of Satyn. Manas had lately been absent on a visit to his brother, but was just returned in very ill humour; and it was foreseen that he would soon appear and renew his attempts to carry off the princess. Accordingly he made his appearance under the walls of the castle, about the time when Sir Eglamour, having quitted the bath, began to arm himself; and casting up his eyes beheld, with grief and indignation, the features of his four-footed favourite exhibited upon the point of a spear.

And when he looked on that head,
"Alas!" he cried, "art thou dead?
My trust was all in thee!
Now, by the law that I live in,
My little speckled hoglin,
Dear-bought shall thy death be!"

After this pathetic exclamation, he beat the walls with great fury, and continued to threaten vengeance on the murderer of his friend, till he was gratified by the sight of Sir Eglamour, who, mounted on a fiery courser, and armed at all points, issued from the castle, and putting his lance in the rest, attacked him at full speed. Sir Manas not only resisted the shock, but in an instant threw down both man and horse; so that the king and his whole court began to despair of the safety of their champion: but Sir Eglamour, lightly springing up, drew his terrible sword, closed with the giant and cut off his right arm. The monster roared with pain, but continued to fight, though yelling at intervals as loudly as ever, till near sunset, when the patient knight, who had

[1] Backbone. [2] Went.

promised to wait fifteen years
liberty, and bestowed on him
to preserve the life of its wear
or by water. The knight thai
up with the greatest care the t
in his adventure; and, after an
the capital of Artois.

Prinsamour, far from testify
head of a second giant, in ac
muttered a few words of comp
death he still hoped to compass
diately to dispatch upon a thir
requested a respite of twelve we
his strength; and having, by
obtained this permission, repaire
bell, to whom he had much to cc
that he had done, and of all t
parted, was terminated by protest
his part, which were re-echoed b
his successful performance of th
anticipated his easy achievement
had promised to reward by the gi
themselves as already united to e
and insensibly began to think ths
almost culpable; so that, misled
usual in that age of the world, t
the order of the ceremonies whicl

The twelve weeks of tranqu
stipulated were soon passed, and
towards Rome, for the purpose
which had long desolated the cou
fore took leave of his mist[illegible]

Sir Eglamour had perished in his conflict with the dragon, began to flatter himself that his former projects respecting the establishment of the fair Crystabell might yet be realized, when he heard with equal surprize and indignation that she was happily delivered of a most beautiful boy.

Then the earl made his vow:
"Daughter, unto the sea shalt thou,
In a ship, by thee one:[1]
Thy younge son shall be thy fere,
Christendom[2] getteth it none here!"
Her maidens wept each one.
Her mother in swoon did fall,
Right so did her friendes all;

but intercession was fruitless, and the lovely Crystabell was, with her infant son, abandoned to the winds and waves in a vessel without mariners, sail, oars, or rudder.

The vessel, however, seems to have performed a voyage of no contemptible length with considerable expedition. In the first instance, indeed, it brought her to a country without any human inhabitants, where she landed, and where a bird, which is still familiarly known to heralds, and which is called a griffin, carried off her infant son, who was enveloped in a scarlet mantle, and had round his waist a golden girdle. The disconsolate mother again embarked, and after a second voyage, during which, "as the great book of Rome says,"[3] she was five days without food, arrived on the shores of Egypt, was discovered and conveyed to the king; and the said king fortunately turning out to be her uncle, was most kindly and hospitably entertained during a period of about fifteen years. In the mean time her son was carried by the griffin into Israel; was found by the king of that country, who happened to be hunting; was educated with great care at his court, under the name of Degrabell, *because he fell from the talons of a griffin*;[4] and became in process of time a most valorous and accomplished knight.

We must now return to Sir Eglamour, who, being whole and sound, took leave of the emperor of Rome and of his fair daughter, and travelling as expeditiously as he could, arrived in Artois with his dragon's head, and learnt the whole extent of his misfortune.

Eglamour went into the hall,
Before the squyers and knightes all:
"And thou, earl of Arteys,
Take," he said, "the dragon's heved:

[1] Thyself alone. [2] Christening. [3] This passage does not refer to the Gesta Romanorum, as Ellis supposes, but merely to the great book of Romance, the original of the tale. [4] It must be left to the sagacity of the reader to find out the language in which the word Degrabell has this meaning.

All is mine that here is leved:
What doest thou in my place?"
Great doel it was to hear,
When he called Crystabell his fere;
"What, art thou drowned in the sea?
God that died on rood bitterly,
On thy soule have mercy,
And on that young child so free!"
The earl was so feard of Eglamour,
That he was fain to take the tower;
That evermore woe him be!

To besiege him in this citadel would have occasioned a loss of much time, and Eglamour was anxious to leave a country now grown hateful to him. He therefore ordered all the property of his enemy to be seized, divided it amongst those whom he knew to be most trusty and necessitous, rewarded other friends by conferring on them the order of knighthood; and having ordered masses to be sung in all the churches for the soul of his Crystabell, departed for the Holy Land, where, during fifteen years, he distinguished himself, both in battle and in tournament, by feats of arms against the unbelievers.

At this time the king of Israel, who had insensibly acquired for Degrabell the affection of a father, became anxious to procure a wife for the young man whom he destined to the possession of his throne; and hearing that there was, at the court of the king of Egypt, a lady of incomparable beauty, set sail for that country, together with his adopted son, whom he had lately invested with the order of chivalry. The king of Egypt received the reverend monarch of Israel with suitable respect, suffered his niece to be exhibited to her young suitor, and declared his willingness to consent to the match, after trying the address of young Degrabell, whom he invited to break a spear with him in the lists on the following day. The young knight readily accepted the offer, overthrew his royal opponent, and was solemnly married to his own mother. But the bride having cast her eyes on the shield of Degrabell, who bore a griffin holding in its talons an infant wrapped in a scarlet mantle, burst into tears, and relating her whole story, was on the same day released,from her unnatural engagement.

The king of Israel, however, seemed to think that Crystabell was too beautiful to remain any longer single, and offered her the choice of all his knights; but her son insisted that those who aspired to the honour of her hand should previously overthrow him as he had overthrown the King of Egypt; and that for the purpose of settling at once the pretensions of a number of candidates, a tournament should be immediately proclaimed throughout all the adjoining country. In this proposal the two kings acquiesced; and Crystabell herself, whom her misfortunes seem to

have inspired with a great propensity to matrimony, having readily acceded to it, the tournament was announced, and attracted to Egypt numberless persons of high rank; amongst whom were the king of Satyn, and the long-lost and almost forgotten Eglamour, who was then returning from his warfare against the Heathens.

The veteran warrior no longer felt solicitous to acquire honour in a tournament, and being ignorant that the prize for which the knights were preparing to contend was that Crystabell for whom he had suffered so much, took his stand near an angle of the lists, and surveyed the combatants in perfect silence, and with apparent indifference. Knight after knight presented himself to claim the hand of the lady, but all were successively unhorsed by the youthful Degrabell, and she would have been left to pine in celibacy, if her champion, ashamed of a series of success, which had cost him so little labour, had not solicited the unknown knight to break a lance with him. Eglamour replied, that his being there was quite accidental, and that, being on his return from the Holy Land, he considered himself as a privileged person. "If so," said Degrabell, "it had been more worship to thee to have come here unarmed." Eglamour, with a smile, asked if he had not yet had justing enough, and added,

"That day falle have I seen,
With as big men have I been,
And yet well gone my way.
And yet, forsooth, said he than,
I will do as well as I can
With thee once to play."

With these words he turned his horse, took his distance, and charging the youth with irresistible impetuosity, threw him out of his saddle to the earth.

Crystabell, who had witnessed her son's overthrow, and for some moments was even alarmed for his life, surveyed his conqueror with trembling curiosity. On his shield was painted a rude representation of the event which he had long deplored; a ship of gold, containing a lady and an infant, and surrounded by waves which "were made both grim and bold," as on the point of overwhelming the unfortunate vessel. These armorial bearings, however, might perhaps be the effect of accident, and she could not venture, on such grounds, to indulge the very improbable hope which the mysterious device so naturally suggested. When he was disarmed, and seated at table by her side, his air and voice, though much altered, gave her confidence in her expectations, and his answers to her questions fully confirmed them. She swooned with joy, and Eglamour would not have failed to do the smae, but that it was necessary to receive in his arms his beloved Crystabell. All the noble guests shared the joy of the

faithful and happy couple, and their accomplished son, for whom the good king of Israel was still as anxious as ever to procure a suitable wife, received the hand of the beautiful Ardanata, daughter of the king of Satyn, who was thus rewarded for a constancy of fifteen years to her old deliverer by obtaining a younger husband in the same family. It was resolved that both weddings should be solemnised in the county of Artois, for which the whole company immediately embarked, and the wicked earl, having very providentially broken his neck by falling from his tower on the day of their arrival, the nuptials of the father and son were celebrated with unexampled festivity in the presence of the kings of Israel and Egypt, and of the Emperor Constantine, who hastened from Rome at the summons of his ancient benefactor.

LAY LE FRAINE.

This ancient and curious little poem, translated from the French of Marie, is preserved in the Auchinleck MS. It is mutilated in two places, and wants the conclusion; these defects, however, are unimportant with respect to the story, which I have supplied from the French. In point of language and versification it has more merit than any poem of the very early period at which it was written, and does not suffer by a comparison with Marie's original.

The author begins his prologue by observing, that in ancient times, Lays, intended to be accompanied by the harp, were composed on all sorts of subjects.

Some beth[1] of war, and some of woe;
And some of joy and mirth also;
And some of treachery and of guile;
Of old aventures that fell ere while;
And some of bourdes[2] and ribaudy;[3]
And many there beth of fairy:
Of all thinges that men seth,
Most of love, forsooth, there beth.
In Bretayne, by old time,
These lays were made; so sayeth this rhyme, &c.

He then informs us, that the Bretons never failed of converting into lays all the anecdotes which they thought worth consigning to memory, and that the following was thus composed and called Lay le Fraine (frêne), or "The Adventure of the Ash."

[1] Are. [2] Jests. [3] Profligacy.

In the "West countrie" lived two knights, both men of opulence, who had been friends from their infancy, and had married about the same time. One of the ladies became pregnant, and after the usual time was delivered of two boys; an event which her husband thought of sufficient importance to announce to his friend, particularly as it had been previously agreed between them that each should become foster-father to the children of the other. He therefore called a messenger, and despatched him to his neighbour with the intelligence.

The messenger goth, and hath nought forgete,
And findeth the knight at his mete;
And fair he gret, in the hall,
The lord, the levedi, the meyné all;
And sith then, on knees down him set,
And the lord full fair he gret.
"He bade that thou should to him te,
And, for love, his gossibbe[1] be."
"Is his levedi delivered with sounde?"[2]
"Ya, sir, y-thonked be God, yestronde."[3]
"And whether a maiden child, other a knave?"
"Tway sones, sir, God hem save!"
The knight therof was glad and blithe,
And thanked Godes sonde swithe,
And granted his errand in all thing,
And gaf him a palfray for his tiding.
Then was the lady of the house
A proud dame, and malicious,
Hoker-full, iche mis-segging,[4]
Squeamous, and eke scorning.
To iche woman she had envie;
She spake these words of felonie.[5]
"Ich have wonder, thou messenger,
Who was thy lordes conseillor,
To teach him about to send,
And tell shame in iche an end,[6]
That his wife hath tway children y-bore!
Well may iche man wite therfore
That tway men her han hadde in bower:
That is hir both dishonour!"

The messenger was sorely abashed by these unexpected and unjust reflections on his mistress; the husband reprimanded his wife very severely for the intemperance of her tongue; and all the women of the country, amongst whom the story was rapidly cir-

[1] Gossip, god-father. [2] Health, safety. [3] Yesterday.
[4] Full of frowardness, each mis-saying or reviling. [5] Wickedness.
[6] Each an end, *i. e.*, in every quarter.

culated, united in prayer to God, that, if she should ever prove with child, a worse misfortune might befall her, and that her calumny on all prolific mothers might receive some signal and dreadful punishment.

Whether the prayers of these pious matrons were as efficacious as their anger was sincere, or whether some other causes may have contributed to the event, the lady did shortly after prove with child, and brought into the world two daughters. The circumstance certainly was very untoward, and the haughty dame felt it most poignantly. She was now reduced to the alternative of avowing herself guilty of a calumny against her innocent neighbour, or of imputing to herself, in common with the other, the crime of adultery, of which she had not been guilty; unless she could contrive to remove one of the twins who had introduced themselves into the world through her intervention, but in direct opposition to her wishes and interest. The project of destroying her own child was, at first, rejected with horror; but after revolving the subject in her mind, and canvassing with great logical acuteness the objections to this atrocious measure, she determined to adopt it, because she could ultimately cleanse herself from the sin, by doing private penance, and obtaining priestly absolution.

Having thus removed her scruples, she called the midwife, and directed her to destroy one of the infants, and to declare that one only had been born. But the midwife, who claimed no inconsiderable share in the glory of adding to the number of human beings by the birth of twins, would not consent to mutilate her own fame by removing either of these living monuments of her science; and the unnatural mother was reduced to seek for a more submissive and supple agent. She had a maid, whom she had educated in her family, to whom she imparted her difficulties, and this confidential counsellor at once proposed a contrivance for removing them. "Give me the child," said she, "and be assured that, without destroying it, I will so remove it that it shall never give you any further trouble. There are many religious houses in the neighbourhood, whose inhabitants cannot be better employed than in nursing and educating orphan children. I will take care that your infant shall be discovered by some of these good people, under whose care, by the blessing of Providence, it will thrive and prosper; and, in the mean time, I will take such means that its health shall not suffer. Dismiss your sorrow, therefore, and trust in my discretion." The lady was overjoyed, and accepted the offer with assurances of eternal gratitude.

As it was her wish that those who should find the child might know that it was born of noble parents,

> She took a rich baudekine,[1]
> That her lord brought from Constantine,[2]

[1] A rich mantle lined with fur. [2] Constantinople.

And lapped the little maiden therein;
And took a ring of gold fine,
And on her right arm it knit,
With a lace of silk in plit.[1]
The maid took the child her mid,[2]
And stale away in an even tide,
And passed over a wild heath;
Thorough field and thorough wood she geth,[3]
All the winter-long night.
The weather was clear, the moon was light;
So that she com by a forest side,
She wox[4] all weary, and gan abide.
Soon after she gan heark,
Cockes crow, and dogs bark;
She arose, and thither wold;
Near and nearer she gan behold
Walls and houses fele she seigh;
A church, with steeple fair and high;
Then n'as there nother street no town,
But an house of religion;
An order of nuns, well y-dight,
To servy God both day and night.
The maiden abode no lengore,[5]
But yede her to the churche door,
And on knees she sat her down,
And said, weepand, her orisoun.
"O Lord," she said, "Jesu Christ,
That sinful mannes bedes[6] hearst,
Underfong[7] this present,
And help this seli[8] innocent,
That it mote y-christened be,
For Marie love, thy mother free!"
She looked up, and by her seigh
An asche, by her, fair and high,
Well y-boughed, of mickle price;
The body was hollow, as many one is.
Therein she laid the child, for cold,
In the pel[9], as it was, byfold,[10]
And blessed it with all her might.
With that it gan to dawe light,
The fowles up, and sung on bough,
And acre-men[11] yede to the plough,
The maiden turned again anon,
And took the way she had ere gon.

[1] Plaited, twisted. [2] With. [3] Goeth. [4] Waxed.
[5] Longer. [6] Prayers. [7] Receive. [8] Simple; harmless.
[9] Fur. [10] Folded. [11] Ploughmen.

The porter of the abbey arose,
And did his office in the close;
Rung the bells, and tapers light,
Laid forth books, and all ready dight.
The church door he undid,
And seigh anon, in the stede,[1]
The pel liggen in the tree,
And thought well that it might be,
That thieves had y-robbed some where,
And gone there-forth, and left it there.
Thereto he yede, and it unwound,
And the maiden child therein he found.
He took it up between his honde,
And thonked Jesu Christes sonde,
And home to his house he it brought,
And took it his daughter, and her besought
That she should keep it as she can,
For she was melche', and couthe than.
She bade it suck, and it n'old,
For it was nigh dead for cold.
Anon a fire she a-light,
And warmed it well, aplight;[2]
She gave it suck upon her barm,[4]
And siththen laid it to sleep warm.
And when the mass was y-done,
The porter to the abbesse com full soon.
"Madame, what rede ye of this thing?
To-day, right in the morning,
Soon after the first stound,[5]
A littlc maiden-child ich found
In the hollow ash there out;
And a pel her about;
A ring of gold also was there;
How it com thither I n'ot ne'er."
The abbesse was a-wondered of this thing.
"Go," she said, "on hying,[6]
And fetch it hither, I pray thee;
It is welcome to God and me.
Ich will it helpen as I can,
And segge it is my kinswoman."
The porter anon it gan forth bring,
With the pel, and with the ring.
The abbesse let clepe a priest anon,
And let it be christen in function.

[1] Place. [2] She had milk, and was able to suckle it.
[3] Certainly. [4] Lap. [5] Hour. [6] In haste.

And, for it was in an ash y-found,
She cleped it Frain in that stound.
The name of the ash is a frain,[1]
After the language of Bretayn;
Forthy,[2] Le Frain men clepeth this lay,
More than ash, in each countrey.
This Frain thrived from year to year;
The abbess' niece men weend it were.
The abbess her gan teach, and beld.[3]
By that she was twelve winter eld,
In all Englond there n'as none
A fairer maiden than she was one.
And when she couthe ought of manhede,[4]
She bade the abbesse her wisse[5] and rede,
Which were her kin, one or other,
Father or mother, sister or brother.
The abbesse her in council took,
To tellen her she nought forsook,
How she was founden in all thing;
And took her the cloth and the ring,
And bade her keep it in that stede;
And, therwhiles she lived, so she did.
Then was there, in that cuntré,
A rich knight of land and fee,
Proud, and young, and jollif,
And had nought yet y-wedded wife.
He was stout, of great renown,
And was y-cleped Sir Guroun.
He heard praise that maiden free,
And said he would her see.
He dight him in the way anon,
And jolliflich thither is gone,
And bade his man segge, verament,
He should toward a turnament,
The abbesse, and the nounes all,
Fair him grette in the guest-hall;
And damsel Frain, so fair of mouth,
Grette him fair, as she well couth.
And swithe well he gan devise
Her semblaunt, and her gentrise,
Her lovesome eyen, her rode[6] so bright,
And commenced to love her anon-right;

[1] In the MS. it is "*freyne*," which I presume is a mistake of the transcriber. [2] Therefore. [3] Protect, defend.
[4] Manhood, here used for the relation of consanguinity.
[5] Teach and advise her. [6] Complexion.

The compas
To be broth
"Madame," l
"I-lovi' wele,
Ich will give
Londes and
That ye shall
When I come
At few wor
He graithes h
Oft he com, by
To speak with
So that, with h
And with his g
She granted hi
When he will, l
"Leman," he said
The abbesse thy
For ich am riche
Ye finde bet than
The maiden grant
And stole away, t
With her took she
But her pel, and h
When the abbess
That she was with
She made mourning
And her bement, 'a
So long she was in
That all his mo

Some lordis daughter for to take,
And his leman all forsake.
And said, him were well more fair,
In wedlock to geten him an heir,
Than lead his life with swiche one,
Of whose kin he knewe none.
And said, "Here besides, is a knight,
That hath a daughter fair and bright,
That shall bear his heritage;
Taketh her in marriage!"
Loth him was that deed to do,
Ac, at last, he granted thereto.
The forward[1] was y-maked aright,
And were at one, and truth plight.
Allas! that he no had y-wit,
Ere the forward were y-smit!
That she, and his leman also,
Sistren were, and twinnes two!
Of a father begeten they were,
Of a mother born y-fere:[2]
That hi[3] so were ne wist none,
For sooth I say, but God alone.
The new bride was graithed with all,
And brought home to the lordis hall.
Her father com with her also,
The levedi her mother, and other mo.
The bishop of the lond, withouten fail,
Come to do the spousail.

* * * *

The young rival of Le Frain was distinguished, like her sister, by a sylvan appellation: her name was *Le Codre* (corylus, the filbert), and the knight's tenants had sagaciously drawn a most favourable prognostic of his future happiness from the superiority of nuts to vile ash-keys; but neither the knight himself, nor any of his household, were disposed to augur favourably of a marriage which tended to deprive them of the amiable orphan. The feast was magnificent, but dull; and never were apparent rejoicings more completely marred by a general feeling of constraint and formality, Le Frain alone, concealing the grief which preyed on her heart, was all zeal and activity; and, by her unceasing attentions, conciliated the pity and esteem of the bride, and even of her mother, who had hitherto felt the utmost anxiety to procure the dismissal of this formidable rival. At the conclusion of the banquet, she employed herself, with the utmost care, in the decoration of the bridal chamber; and, having observed that the covering of the

[1] Contract. [2] Together. [3] They, Sax.

bed was not sufficiently costly, spread over it the magnificent mantle which she had received from the abbess, and had hitherto preserved with the utmost solicitude. She had scarcely left the room, when the bride entered it, accompanied by her mother, who casting her eyes on this splendid mantle, surveyed it with feelings of the most poignant remorse, and immediately recognized the testimony of her crime. She questioned the chamberlains, who were unable to explain the appearance of an ornament which they had never before beheld; she then interrogated Le Frain, and, at the end of a short examination fell into a swoon; exclaiming, "Fair child! thou art my daughter!" Her husband was then summoned, and she confessed to him with tears, and with every expression of penitence, the sinful act which she had committed, and the providential discovery of her daughter by means of the mantle and of the ring, both of which, being presents from himself, were perfectly familiar to his recollection. The knight embraced his child with the utmost tenderness, and prevailed on the bishop to dissolve the marriage, which was not yet consummated, and to unite their son-in-law to the original object of his affections. The other sister was shortly after bestowed on another neighbouring lord, and the adventures of Le Frain and Le Codre were formed into a lay, which, as we have seen, received its name from the former.

SIR EGER, SIR GRAHAME, & SIR GRAY-STEEL.

This romance is by no means deficient in merit; but I do not know of its existence in a perfect state, either in MS. or in print, unless it be preserved entire in Bishop Percy's folio. It was printed (perhaps at Aberdeen) in 1711, and from a copy of this date, in the possession of Mr. Douce, the following abstract is taken. But the printer has evidently followed a very imperfect MS. with which also he seems to have taken great liberties: and the story, as it now stands, is so obscurely told, that the catastrophe is quite unintelligible, and has been, in the present abstract, supplied by conjecture.

That it was extremely popular in the early part of the sixteenth century, is evident from the manner in which it is mentioned in the "*Complaynt of Scotland*," first published in 1549; and the reader will find all the information which can now be collected respecting it, in Leyden's valuable edition of that work, pp. 231, 273, and in Sir W. Scott's Sir Tristrem, p. 287.

In the kingdom of Bealm[1] lived a powerful earl whose name was

[1] The name of this kingdom is probably a corruption of Bohemia. Ellis thought otherwise on the improbable supposition that by *Gallia* the author meant Galloway.

Biges, and who had an only daughter, of incomparable beauty, named Winliane. The young lady, whom it was almost impossible to behold with indifference, was, rather unfortunately for her numerous admirers, of a cold and inflexible character. Having observed that military prowess was the qualification which attracted general esteem, she concluded that men were formed for the sole purpose of fighting; and therefore frankly informed her parents that she was perfectly careless about the rank, or wealth, or age, or temper, or figure of her husband; and that even her deference for paternal authority would not be sufficient to induce her acceptance of a partner for life, because the possession of her person was, in her estimation, the natural right of the man who should be able to win her from a host of rivals.

In consequence of these opinions, the fair Winliane continued long unmarried. Had she been contented to abide by the decision of a single tournament, the matter might have been easily settled; but a peerless knight is not an animal of frequent occurrence. Many champions obtained successively the honour of receiving marks of complacency from the beautiful countess, and were successively obliterated from her memory by more sturdy or more fortunate adversaries; but at length, a young knight, named Sir Eger, having acquired a decided superiority over all his competitors, seemed to have fixed her inconstant inclinations. He was blessed with the promise of her hand; and her choice being extremely acceptable to her parents, preparations were made for the early celebration of their nuptials.

Sir Eger, thus fortunate in his love, was not less so in his friendship. He had a brother in arms, the young and accomplished Sir Graham, who, perfectly indifferent to popular applause, seemed to live for the sole purpose of establishing, beyond competition, the superiority of his companion. These young heroes were inseparable; they inhabited the same apartment; they communicated to each other all their projects and wishes; and Sir Graham was not the least impatient of the two for the arrival of the day, which should unite Sir Eger to his Winliane. But the young lover was unfortunately too much in love. Accustomed to respect all the opinions and caprices of his haughty mistress, he persuaded himself that his valour was not yet sufficiently signalized; and having heard of a perilous adventure, which he might hope to accomplish before the conclusion of his marriage, rashly resolved to undertake it, notwithstanding the wise remonstrances of Sir Graham, to whom alone he had confided his project.

And he went forth, him alone,
And all vanquisht came he home,
In his chamber, upon a night,
Wounded sore, and evil dight.

His knife was tint,[1] his sheath was ta'en,
His scabard from his thigh was gane.
He had mo wounds with sword and knife
Than ever man that had his life.
A truncheon of his spear he bare
To lean him on; he had na mare.
On his bed-side he sate him down,
He groaned sare, and fell in sown.

Sir Graham, having with some difficulty restored him to his senses, endeavoured, but without success, to console him under his misfortune. "Talk not to me of comfort," exclaimed Sir Eger, "since my mistress is lost to me for ever. I am vanquished and disgraced; vanquished in equal combat by a single knight. My armour, as you know, was excellent; it is this nerveless arm which has failed me: I shall see the lovely Winliane bestowed on some more cautious knight, who has remained at home while I was hastening to defeat and infamy; and I have deserved to endure the misery of such a sight." Sir Graham thought it useless to argue any further till he should have learned all the circumstances of his friend's adventure; he therefore remained silent, while Sir Eger pursued his narration.

"I was forewarned by a traveller, whom I met by accident on my road, and who directed me to the territories of my adversary, that to subdue the redoubtable Gray-steel was no easy enterprise; but I resolved to persevere, and to enter the 'land of doubt,' so called from the number of knights whom this champion has successively destroyed. Having passed over a spacious moor, bordered by lofty mountains, I arrived on the banks of a deep river; and, having discovered a ford which had been described to me, continued my journey through a forest which encircled the forbidden land. Before I could reach the plain I heard a confused sound, as of horses' feet. My steed stopped, erected his ears, and prepared to rush forward. I raised my eyes and saw a knight in red armour, and mounted on a bay horse, advancing at full speed towards me; I spurred to meet him, and my spear was so well directed that its point struck him in the middle of the breast; but the shaft shivered in my hands, whilst his spear passed through my shield, through the whole of my armour, and through part of my body. Yet I sate in the saddle. We wheeled, and at the second encounter he slew my horse. I rose as quickly as I could, but his active courser gave him again the advantage: he overthrew me and trampled me under his horse's feet. Having at length recovered my legs, I drew my sword, rushed to meet him, aimed at him a blow in which I exerted all my strength. I missed his person, but cut through his spear and killed his horse. We now met again on equal terms; but my sword seemed to strike on

[1] Dagger.

adamant, whilst his drew blood at every stroke. At length my blade broke in my hand. I drew my dagger and closed with him. Yet in this conflict also he preserved the same advantage. His armour resisted all my efforts, though my blows, as I thought, were not dealt without effect. I had seen him reel and crouch beneath the blow by which I broke my sword; an involuntary groan escaped him when I struck him near the belt with my dagger; and having urged its point through an opening of his vizor, I withdrew it streaming with his blood. But, on renewing the blow, my dagger also broke off at the handle. Meanwhile his weapon was far more efficacious: my hauberk, of the best Milan work, my *actown* (quilted jacket), in short my whole armour, which had often preserved my father, and afterwards myself, from wounds, seemed incapable of opposing the slightest resistance to its edge. Blinded by the blood which flowed down my forehead, and smarting at every pore, I struggled in vain against my well-armed adversary, whom I still attempted to fell with the handle of my dagger. I sunk at his feet in a swoon.

"How long I remained on the ground I know not; but I presume that my trance was of no short duration, because, on my recovery, I perceived by my side a second knight, who had fallen beneath the sword of the terrible Gray-steel. The conqueror had cut off from each of us the little finger of the right hand, as a token of his victory. Seeing a stream of water near us, I crept to it on my hands and knees, washed the blood from my eyes, refreshed myself by a moderate draught and, having found the broken staff of my spear, raised myself by its means and attempted to walk. My own horse, and that of my antagonist, lay dead on the field of battle; but a third, of mean appearance, was grazing at some distance. I mounted him with much pain and difficulty, and began my journey homewards, which I continued during the remainder of the day.

"At the approach of evening I beheld a large town, which I avoided, and advanced towards the castle, which had a spacious garden, with arbours disposed along its inclosure, and banqueting-rooms of great magnificence. Stopping near one of these arbours, I beheld a beautiful young lady, clothed in a scarlet mantle embroidered with gold and pearls, who issued from her bower, and slowly advanced towards me. On my alighting to meet her, she saluted me as a knight, and invited me to repair to the castle, where she assured me that I should receive the most hospitable entertainment, and might profit by the assistance of the most cunning leeches in the whole country; but I declined her offer, and requested only to be provided with food and lodging during a single night, entreating that I might be left in total privacy, as sleep was principally necessary to my recovery. She courteously granted my request; conducted me to her bower; placed me on

her bed; and, having intrusted my horse to the care of one of her damsels, dispatched the other in quest of necessaries for myself.

Baked fowls she brought again,
Spice and wine, bread of main.
A laver[1] they have gotten soon;
Warm water into it was done,
And, in a silver basin,
Her own hands washed mine een.
And when she saw mine hands bare,
Then waxed mine anger far the more.
The glove was whole, my finger was tint;[2]
She might well know it was no dint.
She perceived that I thought shame,
She asked not what was my name,
Or of what country I was come,
Into what place or in what room,
Or of what country that I were,
But eased me in all manere.
Such drink then as she gave me there,
Saw I never in my fare,
That so much could me restore,
For I was vanquished all before;
More weak and weary might no man be,
And dried of blood as any tree.
Her drinks they brought me soon in state,
That I might speak and answer make.
She and her maids, those ladies three,
Of all my gear they spoiled me;
Both of mine hauberk, and mine actown,
Washed me syn, and laid me down.
With her own hands, white as the milk,
She stopped my wounds full of silk,[3]
And syn laid me into a bed,
That was with silken sheets spread.

"They now left me to my repose; but the lady and her maidens assiduously watched me during the night, amusing themselves with songs of love, till the notes of the birds from the neighbouring arbour warned them of the approach of day. The lady then brought me, in a horn, a medicated drink of a green colour, which was so potent that my pains immediately vanished. She again dressed all my wounds, drew from her wardrobe a silken shift, which she put on over my shirt, and then braced on my armour, the weight and pressure of which no longer distressed me. Re-

[1] A basin, *lavoir*, O. Fr. [2] Lost. [3] Common lint would, probably, answer the purpose better; but while silk was a novelty it was thought to possess many medical as well as other perfections.

lled, by her means, to new life and vigour, I thanked her in
rms expressive of the warmest gratitude; but she interrupted
, and said, 'I know, Sir knight, that thou bearest in thy heart
secret passion. When thy love shall again begin to exert its
fluence, all thy wounds will open afresh, and all the pains from
ıich my skill has relieved thee will instantly return. Yet be of
od cheer; for the lady of thy heart, by repeating the same
ıatment which I have pursued, will easily complete thy cure.'
ıving, with great difficulty, persuaded her to accept some trifling
vels which I carried with me, I took leave of this amiable lady.
e supplied me with wine and provisions for my journey; and I
rived, healthy and vigorous, within a short distance of this
ıce: but, on approaching the abode of my beloved Winliane,
e prophetic threat of my fair preserver was verified. I fell
ım my horse in a swoon, my wounds began to bleed afresh, and
ıave scarcely been able to reach my chamber in the miserable
ıte in which you now behold me!"

Sir Graham had listened, in mute attention, to the distressing
rrative of his friend, but was unable to draw from it any topic
rational consolation. "Thou art," said he, "the victim of thy
ihness. Yet, as thy weapons only have failed in a contest with
e formidable Gray-steel, it were unwise to repine. We cannot
ıceal from thy mistress thy return or thy misfortune; but we
ıst alter the circumstances of thy adventure, and relate that thy
ınds have resulted from a conflict with a number of adver-
ies." The advice was good; but an untoward circumstance
d already prevented the success of the stratagem.

Winliane, beginning to fear that Sir Eger's stay would be pro-
ıcted beyond the time fixed for their marriage, was become ex-
mely impatient for his arrival. The window of her bower
nmanded a view of the apartment occupied by the two friends;
l as she was constantly on the watch, the lights which she
ıeld on the night of her lover's return raised her curiosity: so
ıt, throwing a mantle over her shoulders, she hastened to the
ır, and was preparing to enter, when the low and mysterious
ınd of their voices led her to listen to their conversation. Her
s served her so well that she distinctly overheard the real his-
y of Sir Eger's defeat, and the story by which they intended
deceive her; after which she again retired to her chamber,
ugh not so secretly as to escape the notice of Sir Graham, who
pected, from the precipitation with which she rushed by their
ıdow that she was already mistress of their whole secret, and
ı was confirmed in his suspicion, by finding that, in the course
ı few hours, the whole court were informed of Sir Eger's
ırn.

n the mean time he procured for his friend the ablest *leech*
t could be found. The count and countess came daily to the

sick man, who lay without signs of life; while Sir Graham, in answer to their inquiries respecting his adventure, replied, "that travelling in quest of glory, he had been suddenly assailed, in a wild and desert place, by the whole kindred of a knight whom he had formerly overcome. That though they were ten in number, and most ungenerously assailed him all together, he had ultimately killed seven of them, and put to flight the remaining three, though after receiving so many wounds that his life was still in the greatest danger." This report, which considering the prowess of Sir Eger, was not incredible, was generally believed, and the whole court expressed the utmost solicitude for the recovery of the youthful hero.

Winliane alone appeared indifferent about the fate of her lover. Three days elapsed before she condescended to visit him; and even then, after addressing to him a few careless questions, she was preparing to retire, when Sir Graham, fearful that her unfeeling behaviour might produce a dangerous effect on the health of his friend, detained her almost by force in the room; and, having feigned to converse with her in a whisper, declared aloud to Sir Eger, "that the lady had only forborne to see him at the earnest request of his physician, and that her own health had suffered no less than his by this cruel prohibition." The credulous lover was satisfied with this assurance; and during eleven weeks of sickness, the kind attentions of the count and countess, and care of his brother, Sir Pallias, and, above all, the pious frauds of Sir Graham, whose invention constantly devised new excuses for the rare and formal visits of his mistress, continued to keep him in ignorance of her unkindness.

But the mind of his feeling and generous friend was by no means at ease. This system of deceit could not last much longer, and a discovery of the truth might yet be fatal to the convalescent. He therefore determined to ascertain exactly the state of Winliane's affections; and, having engaged her in a conference, pleaded most eloquently, but most ineffectually, the cause of Sir Eger; and, having informed her that he was determined, whenever his health should permit, to seek out and combat the knight who was the cause of his late disaster, requested that she would enjoin him to abstain from an enterprise which could scarcely fail of proving fatal. The lady, after a moment's silence, calmly replied, "Sir Graham, you know that it was always my intention to accept as a husband that man only, who, from whatever cause, should be constantly victorious in every enterprise. Sir Eger appeared to be that man. As such I accepted him for my future lord. I was satisfied with what he had done; I exhorted him to refrain from seeking any new adventures; but he was rash and presumptuous. And what has he gained? You need not answer; for I know all. He has been vanquished; vanquished by Sir Gray-steel. I heard

this from his own lips on the night of his arrival. I will give him no counsel; whether he go or stay, he has forfeited my hand, which he can never recover." Sir Graham, piqued at her insensibility, replied, "He, I am persuaded, will no longer trouble you with his suit, having found, during his last disastrous enterprise, a mistress equally captivating, and, as he says, still more nobly born. Suppose, therefore, since he slights you, that you should accept of me." This sarcastic proposal was answered by a look of indignation, and thus ended the conference.

Sir Graham now determined on the generous project which had long floated in his mind. He repaired to Sir Eger, and said, "The knight who hath disgraced you must be chastised in his turn. Had your weapons corresponded with your courage, he would have been slain, or made prisoner by you; it must be now my business to defeat or kill him under your name and character. But nine days must elapse before I can execute my purpose, because that time will be necessary to persuade the court of your complete recovery. Now rise and dress yourself: exhibit yourself at your window; appear to be occupied in reading romances, or in any other amusement. All will rejoice at the return of your health, particularly the count, who will hope to see you speedily united to his daughter. But of this I have my doubts; for women are very fickle. Next, gradually resume your usual exercises; and lastly, having equipped yourself as if for a distant adventure, repair to court, take leave of the count and countess and return to me, who will be ready to personate you. Remember to watch well the countenance of Winliane; but say little to her, and that with an air of indifference. Should I succeed, my return will be speedy; and you can easily pass a short interval in close retirement (for thus should I do if you were absent) without betraying yourself. If I fail, you will do your best to revenge me; and neither of us will be dishonoured, though both should be numbered amongst the victims of the mighty Gray-steel."—"Nay!" exclaimed Sir Eger, "though I should lie here these seven months, I will depute to no man a quarrel which is solely my own. I thank you much for your noble offer, but I must revenge myself or die."—"If you could lie here seven months without being supplanted by a rival, I would not intrude between you and Sir Gray-steel. But Winliane has encouraged the addresses of Sir Oyles; she knows your whole story, which she overheard by listening at our door; she considers you as disgraced."

Sir Eger said, "If it be so,
Then wot I well, I must forego
Love-liking,[1] and manhood, all clean!"
The water rushed out of his een!

[1] Peace. A. S.

His head he strook, his hands he wrang,
And each hand on another dang:
Sir Grahame then said to him, "Let be!
Ye shall be helped hastily.
For here I vow to God of might,
That I shall ride and seek the knight.
Into what land that he in be,
I shall him slay, or else he me.
And if I chance to win the field,
And get his helm, or yet his shield,
Or any mark of him to see,
The lady will think that it is ye."

Sir Eger now reluctantly consented, and his brother, Sir Pallias, was called in to assist at the conference. Their uncle, Sir Agam, had possessed an excellent sword, which was carefully preserved by his widow, and which it was judged indispensable to procure on this occasion. Sir Graham therefore repaired to the old lady, informed her that her nephew Sir Eger was on the point of going to encounter the terrible Gray-steel, and requested the loan of that weapon: as a security for which he lodged in her hands the charters of all his estates. The negotiation succeeded; and Sir Graham obtained not only the sword, but its whole history, which the good lady related with much prolixity; assuring him that it was as tough as wax, hard as flint, trenchant as lightning, and, in short, so valuable, that the pawn which he left in her hands would be a very inadequate compensation for its loss. Everything being at length provided, Sir Eger put on his clothes, received the congratulations of the court, appeared to gain strength every hour, and on the eighth day arrayed himself in his armour, and repaired to the great hall to take leave of the knights and of the count and countess. It was remarked by all present, that though his air was as confident as usual, he was pale and emaciated; in fact, it was not without effort that he was able to stand under the weight of his armour: and the countess, alarmed for the fate of her intended son-in-law, earnestly entreated him to forego his enterprise till his strength should be re-established. But he persisted in his resolution; and having received on his knees the earl's permission to depart, and humbly kissed her hand, prepared to leave the hall. Winliane was there, but seemed perfectly indifferent to what was passing; and Sir Eger, having been strictly enjoined by Sir Graham to treat her with similar coldness, contented himself with asking her aloud whether she had any commands. "No," she replied, "but I hope you will render this adventure more interesting than the last. You then left a finger behind you; this time you should leave at least a hand!" A murmur of disapprobation was immediately heard through the assembly, and Sir Eger was much mortified; but he

dissembled his feelings, and, bowing to the assembly, retired to his apartment.

Winliane, however void of affection, was by no means deficient in curiosity. She hastened to the window of her bower for the purpose of witnessing her lover's departure, and of judging, by his mode of managing his horse, whether he was indeed so far recovered as to have a chance of success in the perilous enterprise which he had undertaken. In the mean time Sir Eger had thrown off his armour, and Sir Graham, with the assistance of Sir Pallias, was in a few minutes ready to personate his friend. A war-horse, caparisoned with the utmost care under the direction of Sir Pallias, who had attentively surveyed every girth and proved the strength of every buckle, was ready saddled at the door. The two brothers in arms parted after a short embrace. Sir Graham vaulted into the saddle, caused his steed to curvet for some minutes under the window of the astonished Winliane, and then, setting spurs to his sides, departed in full gallop, and with the rapidity of lightning disappeared in the shades of the neighbouring forest. The lady could scarcely believe the testimony of her eyes. She descended from her bower, and repaired to the lodging of the knights, where Sir Eger, fatigued by the weight of his armour, equally dissatisfied with his mistress and with himself, and full of anxiety for Sir Graham, had already retired to bed. She hurried through the outer room without noticing the salutations of Sir Pallias, who attempted to accost her, and passed into the bed-chamber, the windows of which were partly closed, so that the features of the knight within the bed could not be discovered. As she had so lately conversed with her lover, and had still more lately, as she thought, seen him depart on his adventure, she accosted him without suspicion by the name of his friend. "Sir Graham," said she, "I am lost in surprise! I have this moment beheld Sir Eger, who not ten days ago was confined to his bed: yet has he now the air of a hero; and, trust me, he seems likely to speed in what he has undertaken. Little confidence, however, can be placed in the prowess of a knight so lately discomfited. To what purpose should he engage in fresh adventures? His honour can no longer be recovered!" Sir Eger, easily counterfeiting the voice of his friend, utterly denied the triumph of Sir Gray-steel, and repeated most circumstantially to the indignant lady the fabricated tale, which she knew to be totally false; concluding by a declaration, that he was determined not to stir from his bed, nor to admit any visitant except herself, till the return of the injured and defamed Sir Eger. Sir Pallias vouched for the same story, and made the same declaration: so that the fair Winliane, overwhelmed with vexation, and almost in doubt whether all her senses had not conspired to deceive and confounded her, hastily put an end to her visit, and retired to her chamber.

We must now attend upon Sir Graham, who, having reached the forest, began to recapitulate in his mind the directions by which he was to guide himself, for the purpose of finding his road over a large tract of desert country, and the tokens which would enable him to recognise the beautiful Lillias, to whose medical skill his friend had been so much indebted. After thirty miles of a road which was already familiar to him, he would find an extensive moor, and must follow, during four days, the right bank of a mountain torrent, until it should be joined by a second, which he must ford, and then keep the united stream on his left hand till he should arrive at the sea-shore. He must then follow the sands, keeping a rocky forest on his right, till he reached an extensive and cultivated plain. He would then see at the distance a fair castle, with spacious orchards and gardens, and, on a nearer approach, would readily distinguish the lady's bower, which was remarkable by its numerous spires, surmounted by vanes and weathercocks richly gilt, and shining like glass in the sun's rays. The lady was distinguished from her attendants by her height and fair proportions, by the clearness of her complexion, and by the beauty of her eye-brows, which nearly joined. Besides this, there was a small red spot near one of her eyes, which the extreme whiteness of her skin rendered very conspicuous. The silken *sark* (shift,) which he bore with him, would serve as an introduction, and he was to convey to her some rich brooches and jewels in return for her kind hospitality to Sir Eger.

These instructions were fully sufficient for the guidance of a knight, who was of course in the habit of travelling through intricate forests, and of exercising his sagacity in finding his way by means of the sun and stars, by the moss on the stems of trees, and by other natural indications. But Sir Graham was still more fortunate. Having reached the sea-side, he overtook a yeoman mounted on a hackney, who readily undertook to guide him to the castle. From him he learnt that the country which he had just entered was called *Gallias;*[1] that the earl, whose castle he beheld, was named Gorius; that Lillias was his daughter and heiress; her brother, Sir Alistoun, having been killed by Graysteel; and lastly, that she was till unmarried, though she had been betrothed to a knight, named Sir Garrentine, who having attempted to revenge the death of her brother, had been killed by the same formidable champion. The yeoman did not quit Sir Graham till he approached the city, which he entered alone and stopped before the door of a principal burgess, by whom he was received with all the honours due to a knight-errant. His horse was conducted to the best stall in the stable; and the burgess, his family, and servants, were all in motion to provide for him the best means of accommodation: but the knight, hastily dis-

[1] Ellis suggests Galloway, which is by no means evident.

ng, and refusing the offer of an escort, immediately passed
1 the city, and approaching the castle, examined all its
s, and readily discovered the gardens, the arbours, and the
ower, which perfectly agreed with Sir Eger's description.
l not waited long, when he also saw the lady, whom he
ly recognised and accosted as an old acquaintance, producing
same time the *silken sark*, which she had bestowed upon
nd, together with the present of jewels: at the sight of
the beautiful Lillias inquired, with the most tender solici-
ter the health of the knight who had sent her these tokens.
Graham had determined to personate his friend, whom he
resembled in figure, and whose voice he was able to imitate
xactly. He had altered, by means of an ointment, the
of his skin; had carefully concealed his hair; and, con-
n his disguise, answered without hesitation that he was the
who was so much indebted to her for the restoration of his
and life. Lillias, overjoyed at this assurance, earnestly
ed him to accompany her to her bower, where he had been
entertained; but the knight, foreseeing that this must lead
covery of the artifice, replied that he had already taken up
within the town, and must defer his visit to her till he
have accomplished the object of his adventure. Astonished
refusal, she surveyed him with an air of doubt, and hastily
down his glove, and perceiving that his hand was entire,
ned with an air of indignation, that she was no longer sur-
at the precipitation with which the knight had formerly
d home:

"For here such leeching is there none!
There is no leech, in all this land,
Can put a finger to a hand!
The finger that he left in wed,[1]
That has another in its stead,
Both as fair, as whole, as clean
As ever it was or yet had been!
Ye should not, Sir, in a strange land,
Mock, nor yet be over-bourdand;[2]
But, if ye will with bourdings deal,
Right cleanly than ye should them veil—"

aving continued for some time in the same strain, threw
his present of jewels with contempt, and hastily turned from
depart.
ing the early part of this conversation, Sir Graham had con-
ated with great attention and pleasure the mild and benevo-
atures of the beautiful Lillias: but her animation gave them

[1] In pawn. [2] Too fond of raillery.

such additional charms, the blush of indignation in her cheeks was so becoming, and her fine eyes kindled into such dazzling brilliancy, that before the conclusion of her lecture he found himself most seriously enamoured of the fair preacher. To part with her thus was impossible. He seized her hands, detained her in spite of her struggles, and forced her to hear his whole story, which he related with perfect veracity. Lillias was for a time incredulous; but Sir Graham, now in love for the first time, was become so eloquent and persuasive that she could not disbelieve him. Of his approaching conflict with Sir Gray-steel he spoke in terms of rational confidence, not disparaging the prowess of his adversary, but trusting to the justice of his cause; he dwelt much on the accomplishments and merits of Sir Eger, on his brilliant valour, on his truth and constancy to his mistress, on his steady and cordial friendship, but passed over as a thing of course his own disinterested generosity in devoting his own life for the gratification of his friend. This last point, however, was not lost upon the gentle Lillias, who bagan to survey him, if not with love, at least with very sincere admiration. Their quarrel was now ended, and it was agreed that, instead of returning to the city, he should sup in the lady's bower, and be lodged in the same bed which had been formerely occupied by Sir Eger.

After a plentiful repast, the lady began to relate, in her turn, the history of her misfortunes. She had once a brother whom she tenderly loved; an admirer for whom she felt a no less ardent affection; and both had fallen beneath the sword of the inhuman Gray-steel. She could not pronounce that hated name without torrents of tears; Sir Graham could not behold those tears without feeling the most anxious impatience to encounter the wicked champion who caused them to flow, nor without the secret hope of obtaining by his destruction that place in her heart, which, by her own confession, was now unoccupied. She unconsciously repeated, again and again, the same story, because Sir Graham continued to listen with unabated attention, and because she reflected with increasing terror on the fatal prowess of Gray-steel, and thought that she could not insist too often on the caution, as well as on the determination, with which it was necessary to encounter that dreadful antagonist. The night rapidly wore away, and Sir Graham would have been glad to pass the whole of it in conversation; but the lady at length dismissed him to his bed, where he lay without closing his eyes, his imagination being employed, sometimes in picturing the amiable Lillias, sometimes in representing his adversary prostrate at his feet. At last the day broke, and never had he wished so anxiously for its arrival. The dawn was ushered in by the songs of birds from the neighbouring arbours, and by the still more welcome approach of his lady who, attended by her two maidens, brought a long train of baked meats and spiced

vines, of which he was compelled by their importunate kindness o swallow a reasonable quantity.

Sir Graham being now ready to depart, the lady exclaimed:

"Sir Graham! ah, knight of aventure!
In press[1] think on your paramour![2]
I will not bid you think on me;
Think on your love, wherever she be,
And on your friends that are at hame,
And on your guesting you have ta'en.
And here your supper shall be dight,
I think ye shall be here at night.
Think not Gray-steel, albeit he wold,
Shall hinder you your tryst[3] to hold!"
He said, "Lady, so God me rede,
An if ye would, he shall not speed!"

Lillias sent a page to accompany him to his inn, and, with the age, a large bottle of her best and strongest wine, which he was ordered to fasten to the saddle-bows. The horse, who had fed s plentifully and had slept more soundly than his master, appeared mpatient for action; and Sir Graham, vaulting into the saddle, egan his march, accompanied by the applause and pity of numeous spectators.

Women weeped sore for the knight,
When he passed out of their sight;
They trowed he would be in that stead,
Where many men had left their head.
Ere it was mid-morn of the day,
He came where that the place did lay
Which was called "the land of doubt;"
A forest lying round about.
In Roman stories who will read,[4]
Two miles of length, and two of brede.[5]
He saw no thing into that stead,
But great felon dun deer and red.
He saw beside him, on a height,
A fair castel, with towers wight.
A deep river, long and brade:
Was never one that over it rade,
(That had not Sir Gray-steel his leave)
That came again without repreave.[6]
Sir Graham he looked not to that,
But sought a ford, and that he gat.

[1] Crowd. [2] Love. [3] Place of appointment.

[4] Ellis again errs in conjecturing a reference is here intended to the esta Romanorum. It, of course, refers to the *romance stories*.

[5] Breadth. [6] Reproof, here used for dr[illegible]

When he was on the other side,
Then fair and hulie[1] could he ride.
He rode the two-part of the land,
And nothing found he there stirrand.
He 'lighted on his foot, and stood,
To ease his horse, and do him good.
His spear he sticked, it was so lang;
His shield upon his saddle hang;
Syne, drank of wine, and made good cheer;
Then thought upon his lady dear;
And then, no longer would he bide,
But near the castle can he ride, &c.

Sir Gray-steel, informed by his spies that an adventurous knight awaited him in the forest, at length issued from his castle, clad in his red armour, and mounted on his powerful bay horse, whose footsteps shook the ground to a considerable distance. Sir Graham, who had been long lost in thought, started from his reverie, recognized the hateful enemy of his friend and of his mistress, defied him to mortal combat, and, firmly grasping his lance, rode at full speed to the encounter. So true was his eye, and so well had he directed the weapon, that the hitherto invincible Gray-steel was thrown to a distance on the field. He rose, however, unhurt, and, drawing his sword, ran furiously to meet Sir Graham, who having sprung from his horse advanced towards him, anxious to terminate as quickly as possible a conflict on which his life was staked. But though eager he was not precipitate: he husbanded his strength, and waited till he was sure of his aim; when discharging a dreadful blow on the helmet of his antagonist, he drove the metal into the skull, and inflicted a dreadful wound. But Gray-steel, long inured to combats, and losing all sense of pain in the desire of revenge, struck at the same instant the shoulder of Sir Graham, and with such power that he dropped on one knee, and scarcely recovered with his left hand the sword which was slipping from his right. The victory, therefore, was still undecided; and the two champions at first appeared to be equally enfeebled; but in a short time the anguish of Sir Gray-steel's wound became almost intolerable; his brain became giddy, his stomach sickened, and his sight grew confused; while Sir Graham, whose arm had been benumbed and rendered senseless by the first shock, gradually recovered his vigour. Aware of this advantage from the ill-directed blows of his adversary, he called on him to yield himself and sue for mercy; but the indignant Gray-steel replied by a fierce and haughty defiance, and, raising his sword with both hands, dealt such a blow on the head of Sir Graham that the blood burst from his nose, and he staggered a few paces

[1] Slowly.

backward: he, however, soon recovered himself, and discharging a back-stroke on the throat of his enemy, nearly severed the head from the body.

Gray-steel into his death thus thraws;[1]
He walters,[2] and the grass up-draws;
His arms about him could he cast,
He pulled herbes and roots fast.
A little while then lay he still,
(Friends that him saw liked full ill)
And bled into his armour bright.

While Sir Gray-steel was expiring in convulsions, the victor repaired to his horse, and, taking the bottle from his saddle-bow, swallowed a copious draught of wine, the gift of the provident Lillias. He then hastily returned to his slaughtered enemy; cut off the right hand, which he placed in its mailed gauntlet; put on his own head the golden helmet of Sir Gray-steel; and, having adjusted the two shields on the saddle of his own horse, whom he led in his right hand, mounted the bay charger, and hastened from the field of battle, lest he should be molested in his retreat by a sally of Sir Gray-steel's adherents from the neighbouring castle.

Though he rode as fast as he could, it was night before he reached his inn in the city, from whence he departed in the morning. He was immediately attended by crowds of inhabitants, who pressed forward to behold the wonderful knight who had achieved the adventure of "*the land of doubt*," and brought off the spoils of the terrible Gray-steel. The golden helmet, on which no former champion had been able to make any impression, passed from hand to hand; the great bay steed with his golden saddle, and the shields with the bearings of the two knights, were anxiously examined; but curiosity was particularly busy with the features of Sir Graham, while he was impatient to withdraw himself as soon as possible from the public eye, lest some untoward accident should lead to a discovery of his secret, and deprive his friend of the honour of the adventure. He called his host, and said, "Though not dangerously hurt, I am wounded, and much fatigued, so as to stand in need of a good leech. Besides, though Sir Gray-steel is dead, his friends may seek to revenge him, and, if they learn that I am lodged in this open town, may accomplish their purpose. I would fain repair to the castle, or to the bower of Lillias, whose skill is so well known to me; and request you to conduct me thither, and to take with you the helmet and the glove, which I have engaged to lay at her feet as a proof of my success." The host obeyed, and conducted him to the bower.

When they arrived, they found the gate closed. With[illegible]

[1] Turns; throws. [2] Tosses, welters, tumbles, Sib[illegible]

table was prepared, at which sat the desponding Lillias accompanied by her damsels. She for a time surveyed the untouched dainties, and then exclaimed,

"He that supper for is dight,
He lies full cold, I trow, this night!
Yestreen[1] to chamber I him led;
This night Gray-steel has made his bed!"

After these and similar reflections she relapsed into her melancholy reverie, which was interrupted by the voice of the burgess, who solicited admittance. One of the maidens replied, that at such an undue hour he could only gain access to her mistress by going round through the castle, where the key was always lodged; but he insisted, declaring himself the messenger of the adventurous knight who had left them in the morning, and answering their questions in such a manner as to prove the truth of the assertion. Lillias now interfered, observing that she rejoiced in the knight's return, and would have been happy to receive him with every attention; but that, since he preferred his inn in the town, she did not wish for any communication with his messenger. Sir Graham, ashamed of having so far trifled with her kindness, excused himself by declaring that the darkness of the night had compelled him to take a guide; but that he had not lost a moment in the town, having immediately hastened to thank her for her hospitality, and once more to implore her assistance.

At the sound of his voice all obstacles vanished, the doors flew open, and even the burgess was overpowered with caresses; while the knight was assailed by a rapid succession of questions, which he answered as shortly as he could, assuring the lady that he had constantly thought on her during the combat, and that to her image he had been, under the blessing of Providence, indebted for his victory. Lillias, during the stay of his guide, could only thank him by a look of love and gratitude; but, having dismissed the burgess, repeated all her questions for the purpose of hearing a repetition of the same answer, and was preparing to make a similar avowal of her tenderness, when the bloody hand of Gray-steel inclosed in its mailed gauntlet met her eyes, and, awakening the recollection of her former misfortunes, drew from her a flood of tears. She now reproached herself with forgetting, for a moment, that the formidable Gray-steel could not have fallen quite unrevenged; that his sword, which never descended in vain, could not have suddenly lost its edge; and that her lover in all probability was severely, perhaps dangerously, wounded. She called her damsels to assist in unlacing the knight's armour, examined the grievous hurt on his shoulder, shuddered at the sight, and with a trembling hand began to apply the necessary remedies; while she

[1] Yesterday evening.

avowed, with perfect simplicity of heart, her unbounded admiration of the virtues and affection for the person of her patient. "Might I," said she, "impart to my father, on whose secrecy you may confidently rely, the history of what you have done, he would be ready, I am sure, to reward, even with the present of all his lands, the conqueror of the ferocious Gray-steel!" "I ask nothing, fair Lillias, but your hand." "And that shall be yours," replied she, "when you think fit to claim it. I will now leave you to my damsels, who will serve you with spice and wine, and will return with my father as soon as you shall have resumed your armour and be ready to receive him."

The earl was still in the hall. Supper being ended, the minstrels had begun their music, to which, however, he paid no attention, his mind being painfully occupied by the recollection of his misfortunes, and by incoherent projects of vengeance against the cruel Gray-steel. He paced silently backwards and forwards in the hall, his knights respectfully forbearing to intrude on his reverie, when Lillias suddenly entered with an air of giddy gaiety, and, having inquired into the cause of his melancholy, promised him immediate consolation, and proceeded to relate the whole story of Sir Eger, of his defeat, of the relief which she had afforded him, of the subsequent adventure of his brother in arms, and of the destruction of Gray-steel, whose helmet and shield together with his bloody hand, were then in her bower. "And there," exclaimed the earl, "is the astonishing youth who has destroyed the ferocious monster?" "He also," replied Lillias, "is in my bower, but means to depart at day-break. Will my father condescend to visit him?" The earl instantly seized the hand of the countess, and, following his daughter, advanced towards the knight, who saluted him most respectfully; after which he stepped on his knees, returned thanks to God, and, addressing Sir Graham, exclaimed,

"On you be worship and honour!
Of fortune you have won the flower,
So doughtily as ye have 'sailed,
And that many thereof have failed.
Therefore, to God a gift I give
Everlasting, that, while I live,
It shall be yours all that is mine!"
The lady made the knight a sign:
The knight kneeled full courteously,
And said, "Then, lord, this young lady,
I will now ask her for my wage,
And have her into marriage."

The earl and countess readily gave their consent. It was agreed that Graham should receive her hand as soon as he should have accomplished his adventure; and during seven days, which

were employed in completing the cure of his wound, the helmet and shield of Gray-steel were publicly exhibited at court, and it was announced that the hand of Lillias was destined to the unknown knight who had revenged the death of her brother.

On the eighth day Sir Graham departed before the dawn, and, travelling with all possible expedition, reached the foot of the mountains before night, and had the good fortune to obtain an excellent lodging in a small town, in the house of a burgess whom he overtook on the road. Here he was informed by a very loquacious hostess, that he was still in the land of Gallias (Galloway?), and that the whole country between the mountains and the sea was dependent on the father of Lillias; so that his sleep, it may be presumed, was rendered much sweeter by the image of his amiable mistress. He then was guided by his host to the edge of the moorlands, and received from him a supply of provisions for the next four days; during which, guiding himself by means of his old land-marks, he travelled over a desert country, seeking nothing but

——great mountains on his right hand,
Both does and roes dun and red,
And harts, ay casting up their head,
Bucks that brays, and harts that hailes,[1]
And hinds running into the fields;
And he saw neither rich nor poor,
But moss, and ling, and bare wild moor.
So it was, that four days and mare,
Ere he could win to Sir Eger,
Who lived into great distress,
'Biding at home in langsameness.[2]
Them came he home within the night,
And no man got of him a sight.

The joy of Sir Eger at the return of his friend was extreme, and the remainder of the night was almost wholly spent in the recital of his adventures in the "land of doubt," and in the principal castle of Gallias. At length, however, it became necessary that Sir Graham should retire to his repose: and it was agreed that Sir Pallias should, at the dawn of day, repair to court to notify the return of the supposed Sir Eger, and that the knight himself should speedily follow, arrayed in his armour, and bearing with him the trophies of his victory. A return so triumphant was likely to captivate once more the vain mind of Winliane; but her lover was strictly enjoined to treat her with the same scorn which she had manifested towards him during his misfortunes; and as experience had now taught him the necessity of such conduct, he performed his part with sufficient asperity, rejected the kiss which

[1] Cry. [2] Listlessness.

she offered, and loudly assured her before the whole court, that a heart so vain and versatile as hers was not worth his acceptance.

Winliane, equally disconcerted and astonished by this reception, hastened with her complaints to Sir Graham. "My lord, Sir Eger," said she, "is grievously offended with me, but without cause. If I have erred, it was through a natural and excusable mistake; for how could I suspect, when he returned discomfited from the former battle, that he was capable of the brilliant enterprise which he has now achieved?" Sir Graham far from consoling her, answered with an air of compassion, that his friend appeared to have transferred his whole affection to the lady whom he had met during his first adventure, and who, having greatly assisted him in this last journey, had strong claims on his love and gratitude. Sir Eger entered the room, and by his careless and even sarcastic manner confirmed her belief in Sir Graham's pretended suspicions; and the lady, completely humbled, retired to her chamber accompanied by Sir Pallias, who vainly attempted to intercede with Sir Eger in her favour, and who firmly believed that she could not long survive, under the torment of the conflicting passions by which she was agitated.

Sir Graham, however, had no intention of delaying the negotiation, but only meant to effect it in his own way; and directed Sir Eger to go and amuse himself during some hours in the forest, promising him at his return the hand of his mistress, together with complete and public satisfaction for the affronts which he had received from her. He then repaired to Winliane, and, after alarming her by the assurance that his friend's short expedition into the forest was only preparatory to his final departure, which would probably take place in a few days, observed that she might possibly turn this incident to her advantage. "Sir Eger," said he, "once loved you most entirely, and I suspect that some remains of that passion still lurk within his breast, though suppressed by pride and indignation. The insult which you offered him was as public as it was cruel and unprovoked; let your contrition be equally notorious. Assemble all the ladies of the city; put yourself at their head; meet him in solemn procession; fall on your knees before him, and entreat his forgiveness. Be assured that, if your foolish pride do not again interfere, Sir Eger will be your own." Winliane, who had lost all hopes of attaining the great object of her life by marrying a hero, eagerly accepted the conditions, and executed them most scrupulously. The wedding was concluded in the course of the day, and was followed, as usual, by a series of festivities which lasted during a fortnight.

Sir Graham, having thus secured the happiness of his friend, became anxious to fulfil his own engagements with the amiable Lillias. But it was impossible that he should depart unobserved, and it was difficult to invent a plausible reason for quitting his

"brother in arms" at such a moment, without exciting suspicions in the mind of Winliane. But the knight had foreseen the difficulties, and his inventive genius had devised a stratagem by which they were effectually removed.

Sir Eger was directed to inform his bride, in seeming confidence, that, during his last expedition against Sir Gray-steel, he had bound himself by a vow to return into that country, or to find some good knight as his substitute, for the purpose of accomplishing an adventure of great importance to the heiress of Gallias. Winliane, therefore, suspecting that this lady was the rival to whom Sir Graham had often alluded, was very anxious to divert her husband from the project of making this dangerous visit, and earnestly entreated him to entrust the adventure to Sir Pallias; but Sir Eger having observed that his brother, though sufficiently brave, was too fond of pleasure, and particularly too much addicted to wine, for such an important commission, and that Sir Graham alone could be trusted as his substitute, she resolved to persuade Sir Graham, if possible, to accept it. She offered him any portion of her father's treasures which he might think necessary for the journey, together with as many attendants as he might require; and, when she saw him depart at the head of a splendid retinue, rejoiced not a little at the success of her negotiation.

Sir Graham, after a prosperous journey, arrived at the city of Garrace, the residence of his amiable mistress; and, having left Sir Hugh, his attendant knight, together with his fifty squires, at the inn which he had formerly occupied, proceeded with his host to the bower of Lillias. On the following morning he marched at the head of his company to hear mass, and to pay his court with becoming deference to the earl and countess, who received him with sincere satisfaction, and at the expiration of a few days, which were employed in making preparations for the nuptials, bestowed on him the hand of their lovely and accomplished daughter. The wedding was followed, as usual by magnificent tournaments, and the rejoicings throughout the earl's dominions were universal and sincere; his subjects anticipating the prospect of many years of glory and security under the protection of the invincible Sir Graham.

Nothing was now requisite to gratify every wish of his heart, but the company of his friend Sir Eger, who, on receiving the first intimation of his desire, collected a company of a hundred squires and knights, departed with his beloved Winliane for Garrace, and was welcomed by a series of festivities more magnificent than the country of Gallias had ever before witnessed. Here therefore it should seem that the author would have done well to terminate his recital; but he had judged otherwise, and we must endeavour to follow him to the conclusion.

The scene of joy which followed the meeting of the two friends

was suddenly interrupted by the illness of Sir Graham: and so rapid was the progress of the disease, that a few days conducted him to his grave. The tender and affectionate Lillias, exhausted by the fatigue of incessant watching, and stunned by the weight of this irremediable calamity, beheld the preparations for his funeral in silent anguish, and seemed nearly as lifeless as the corpse which was deposited in the grave; but the impetuous Sir Eger, yielding to the violence of his grief, threw himself on the body with loud exclamations, and then proceeded to justify the excess of his sorrow by relating the whole extent of his obligations to Sir Graham, the real conqueror of Gray-steel, whose generosity was still more unexampled than his valour. Nothing could exceed the astonishment and indignation of Winliane at this unexpected recital. She loudly protested that she could not forgive herself for having, though unknowingly, shared the bed of a beaten champion; that she henceforth abjured his company for ever; that she should now carry her shame and misery to a religious house, and hoped to be freed by a speedy death from the hated recollection of her husband. This wish was fulfilled; and before the end of two years she expired in a convent. In the mean time Sir Eger, scarcely conscious of her absence, but inconsolable for the loss of his friend, determined to bear arms against the infidels. He repaired to Rome, received the papal absolution, passed over to the island of Rhodes, soon raised himself by his valour to the command of the Christian army, and during two successive campaigns obtained so many brilliant victories, that all Europe resounded with the fame of his talents and success. But neither wealth nor glory could compensate for the death of his friend. He resigned his command, and returned towards his own country; but, having heard on his road the fate of Winliane, repaired to the capital of Gallias, where he found in the amiable Lillias a companion in his grief, who was always ready to expatiate on the merits of the accomplished Sir Graham. By degrees the two mourners began to feel that each was less miserable when the other was present; and as one only means occurred to prevent their future separation, and to preserve the rich and unprotected widow from the addresses of importunate suitors, they finally agreed to unite their hands and fortunes. The author concludes by beseeching "Jesus, heaven's king,"

> To grant them grace, and good to spend,
> And love aye, while their latter end!

SIR DEGORÉ.

This romance is of high antiquity, being preserved in the Auchinleck MS. It is also contained in Bishop Percy's folio[1]. The following abstract is made from a transcript of the black letter copy in Garrick's collection, by W. Copland; containing 996 lines. The title in the Auchinleck MS. is more properly written Sir *Degare*, *i. e.*, Dégaré, or L'égaré; the name being intended to express (as the author tells us, in line 230) "a thing [or person] almost lost."

THERE was once a king of England,[2] who was excessively fond of tournaments, because it had never happened to him to be overthrown, and he was amused by tumbling his adversaries into the dust. His love of this recreation was only equalled by his affection for his only daughter, a young lady of exquisite beauty; and as numberless kings, princes, and lords were induced to become her suitors, partly on account of her charms and accomplishments, and partly "for love of her great heritage," he contrived to gratify both his tastes at once, by making a decree, that no man should receive the hand of the princess until he had justed with the king, and caused him to lose his stirrups. In a short time there were few persons of distinction in Europe who had not been unhorsed by the king of England; and the well-wishers to the fair princess began to apprehend that she would with difficulty find a husband.

The king, it may be presumed, never heard this prognostic, and was by no means impatient for the marriage of his daughter. Her company consoled him for the want of her mother, who had lost her life in bringing her into the world, and whom he regretted so sincerely that he never could be induced to enter upon a second marriage. He had even instituted an annual fast in honour of her memory; and, attended by his daughter and by his whole court, repaired to the distant church where the remains of his beloved wife were interred, and spent the day in prayers for her soul, and in acts of charity to the poor.

On one of these occasions the princess, who, with her attendants, formed the rear of the procession, suddenly called to her chamberlain to stop, for the purpose of arranging some part of her dress, which had been disordered by the motion of her horse. The

[1] Another copy is in MS. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38. [2] By this appellation the author does not seem to mean any king of the whole island. His heroes never cross the sea, but only travel a long way to the westward. Perhaps may have been some Saxon chieftain in Northumberland, rather Welsh or Gaelic.

vas short; but they were travelling through a forest, so ey had soon lost sight of the procession; and inadvertently a wrong road, and quickening their pace, they were com- bewildered before they discovered their error. There was) resource but to stop and listen. The weather was in- hot. They alighted, and laid down on the grass. By their attention slackened, and they all fell asleep, ex- the princess, who, delighted by the songs of the birds, and ed by the beauty of the wild plants by which she was sur- d, wandered from flower to flower, and, insensibly losing y a second time, found herself quite alone in the midst of less solitude. She was now dreadfully alarmed, and began ehend that the beasts of the forest would shortly seize and her, when she beheld a stranger knight in a splendid g-dress, who advancing towards her, declared that he had en in love with her, and that, finding her thus in his he was determined to use the opportunity, and to treat her mistress. Her screams and resistance were equally inef- , and the audacious stranger, having accomplished his pur- ius addressed her:

He said, "Madame, gentil and free,
With child I wot well that ye be.
Well I wot it shall be a knave;
Therefore my swerde he shall have,
My good swerde of ameaunt;[1]
For therewith I slew a geaunt.
I brake the point in his heved,
And in the field I it leaved.
Dame, take it up; lo it is here;
For thou speakest not with me this many a year.
And yet, peraventure, time may come,
That I may speak with my son,
And by this swerde I may him ken."
He kissed his love, and wente then.

princess, stupified with terror and astonishment, gazed in on her ravisher, till the trees concealed him from her sight: en, picking up the sword which had cost her so dear, en- red to explore the way to her companions, and fortunately hem still immersed in a deep sleep. It was necessary, in t place, to compose her countenance, and to conceal under e the fatal sword; after which she awakened her chamber- d her maidens, ordered them to mount, and, having shortly tered some of the messengers whom the king had dispersed h the forest in search of her, was at length safely conducted

[1] bably a mistake for *adamant*, but the Cambridge manuscript reads

to the chapel, and from thence accompanied by her fathe palace.

The adventures of this disastrous day were so obscurely in the lady's recollection, that when abandoned to solitu silence, she almost persuaded herself that the whole was r than a frightful dream. But the sword remained in her sion, an unimpeachable witness to the truth. She also r collected that the knight had thrown into her bosom a gloves, assuring her at the same time that they were enc She put them on, and found that they adapted themselves shape of her hand no less accurately than the skin whi covered; nor was it long before she was convinced, by a t symptoms which could not be mistaken, that her ravish strictly adhered to truth in assuring her of her pregnancy.

To escape detection, without the assistance of an acco would have been impossible; she therefore communicat fearful secret to one of her damsels, who shortly proved worthy of the confidence, by adopting such multiplied prec that the princess was actually delivered of a son without excited for a moment the smallest degree of suspicion. Th was instantly conveyed to the damsel's apartment, where richly dressed and placed in a cradle, together with the gloves, twenty pounds of gold, and ten pounds of silver. T means of securing for her child a favourable reception the mother added a letter.

She knit the letter with a thread
About his neck, a full good speed.
Then was in the letter writ,
(Whoso it founde should it witte)
"For Christis love, if any good man
This woful childe finde can,
Do him be christened of priestes hand!
And to-help him to live in land,
With this silver that is here,
Till he may armes bear,
And helpe him with his owne good,
For he is come of gentil blood."

The damsel only waited for the hour of night, when, st from the palace, she conveyed the child in its cradle to th of a hermit's cell in the forest, and returned in a few ho comfort the mother by the assurance of its safety.

They were aware that the hermit, being accustomed to ri quently in the night to his prayers, was likely to hear th cries of the infant. In fact, he did so: and, having perus letter, and carefully locked up the gloves and the money, tened the child by the name of Degoré, and conveyed it t house of his sister, who resided in a neighbouring town, f

ıe of being nurtured. Here the boy remained ten years, vhich he was sent back to the hermitage; where the hermit ht him of clerke's lore" during ten more years, and then, ; revealed to him the secret of his birth, and given him the and the money which remained after defraying the expenses education, dismissed him with his benediction, and advised) spare no pains in searching for his father.

youth had received from nature an athletic frame, and had ed strength and activity by constant exercise and exposure weather during his rustic education in the forest. He had vell instructed by the hermit in his religious duties, and n the laws and customs of courtesy; but the good man had inable to teach him the exercises of chivalry, from the want :oper suit of armour, with which, however, he advised him vide himself at the first convenient opportunity. In the time Degoré was armed with a ponderous and knotty club,)on on which he placed, not without reason, considerable)e; and he had scarcely advanced a day's march through the when he had the good fortune to discover a knight, of a appearance, engaged in single combat with a huge dragon.

Then was there a dragon great and grim,
Full of fire, and also venym,
With a wide throat and tushes great,
Upon that knight fast gan he beat:
And as a lion then was his feet,
His tail was long and full unmeet.
Between his head and his tail
Was twenty-two foot, withouten fail.
His body was like a wine-tun,
He shone full bright against the sun.
His eyen were bright as any glass,
His scales were hard as any brass;
And thereto he was necked like a horse:
He bare his head up with great force.
The breath of his mouth that did out blow,
As it had been a fire on low.[1]
He was to look on, as I you tell,
As it had been a devil of hell.

knight had defended himself for some time with great idity: but as his sword made no impression on the dragon's , he was compelled to implore the assistance of Degoré; who, tly stepping forward, began to cudgel the monster with such ty, that, though the scales still resisted, they were unable to ve him from a number of very disagreeable bruises. The indeed was much annoyed by his enemy's long tail, which him severely: but having successively broken the animal's

[1] A small hill or eminence

legs, he at length concluded the combat by dashing out his brains; and then attended the knight, who was moreover a powerful and wealthy earl, to his palace, where, in addition to a sumptuous entertainment, he received the order of a considerable investiture, together with the hand of the earl's only daughter in marriage. "Sir," said he, "let me see your fair daughter, and all the ladies of your court. If she, or any of them, can put on a certain pair of gloves, which I carry in my pocket, I will accept your offer; if not, I must take my leave." The experiment was made without success; and the young adventurer departed, after receiving, as the reward of his services, the order of knighthood, an excellent war-horse, a complete suit of armour, a page to attend him, and a palfrey.

Continuing his progress through the forest, he at length met the heralds from the king of England, who, it seems, had still continued to just with the same success, and whose daughter perhaps, after an interval of twenty years, had ceased to attract such a crowd of suitors. Sir Degoré listened with great interest to the recital of the king's long succession of victories.

> And thought, "He was a doughty man!
> And I am in my yonge blood,
> And I have horse and armour good,
> And, as I trowe, a feel good steed;
> I will assay if I may speed!
> An I may beare the king down,
> I may be a man of great renown;
> And if that he me fell can,
> There knoweth no body what I am.
> Death or life, what so betide,
> I will once against him ride!"

Having formed this resolution, he rode into the city, and, having taken up his inn, sent his page to the king, to solicit the honour of the combat. The challenge was joyfully accepted, and the next day appointed for the encounter.

On the knight's appearance in the lists, it was immediately admitted by the king, and by all the assembly, that the prize had never yet been disputed by a champion of so much promise. Sir Degoré, conscious of his inexperience, and diffident of his strength, but persuaded that the event of a tournament was always decided by the particular interposition of Heaven, had devoutly attended mass, and humbly offered three florins to the three persons of the trinity,—in consequence of which he felt confident of victory; whilst the king, long accustomed to conquest, and presuming on the usual effects of his matchless skill and vigour, no less confidently anticipated an easy triumph. Sir Degoré received on his shield the first lance of his assailant, without being at all moved, though his own lance was so ill directed that it totally failed of

its effect. His second attempt was not more fortunate; for he again missed his blow, and received the king's weapon against his breast; his horse was suddenly stopped in his charge, reared, and was near falling backwards on his rider. At the third career he took truer aim; the two champions met at full speed, and their spears shivered in their hands. The king now lost his temper, and with it lost all his advantage: seizing a more ponderous lance, and spurring forward with blind precipitation, he missed Sir Degoré in his turn, and was thrown, together with his horse, some distance on the ground.

The numerous spectators were much astonished, and the princess seriously alarmed by this unexpected termination of the combat; but the king himself, true to the word which he had pledged before his barons, courteously assured Sir Degoré, whom he accosted by the name of "fair son," that, if his birth and education corresponded with his prowess, he should be happy in bestowing on such a man the hand of his daughter, together with the right of succession to all his dominions. He then, with the same frankness, proceeded to the execution of his promise, and led the parties from the place of combat to the cathedral, where the knight was solemnly married to his own mother. A magnificent banquet was prepared in the great hall, where the guests were as noble, and the minstrels as numerous and noisy, as usual; and at the close of this day of fatigue and festivity, the monarch, having accompanied the married couple to the bridal apartment, was preparing to leave them, when Sir Degoré uttered an exclamation of grief and horror,

> And said anon, with heavy cheer,
> "Me had liever than all my kingdom dear,
> That now is seized into my hand,
> That I were faire out of this land!"

As such a speech, on such an occasion, was rather enigmatical, and by no means flattering, the king naturally inquired whether there was any circumstance at which he had taken offence; and the youth answered, that he had made a vow not to marry any woman who could not put on a certain pair of gloves, which he usually carried about him. Now the laws of chivalry peremptorily required the accomplishment of a vow, though it should not be very consonant to common sense; and as it was natural that the young knight, at the time of leaving his inn, should have been solely occupied about fighting his adversary, whose hands the loves could not possibly fit, and should have therefore neglected to take them with him, courtesy required that the king should patiently expect their arrival. He did so; and no sooner were they produced, than the princess, having drawn them on with great ease, fell down, and began to cry,

become the grandfather of the st
marriage was dissolved as rapidly a
much more to the satisfaction of the
Sir Degoré, having received from th
determined to undertake immediate
departed without any other attend
with no knowledge of his route, ex
travel constantly to the westward.

By pursuing this direction he so
where he beheld, during the day, gr
and became very solicitous, on the a
better covering and more tranquillity
likely to afford him. At length he
eminence, a fair castle, and ordered
charity's sake, a lodging during th
returned, but

The draw-bridge was up-
And the gate stood open
Upon the castel they gan
And first he stabled up h
And then he set up his h
Enough they found of co
He went about and gan
Both in the court and el
Neither for love, nor yet
Living man none there t
And in the midst of the
There was a great fire in
Then said his [illegible]

Twain of them bowes did bear,
And two of them charged were
With venysoun that was full good.
Then Sir Dégore up stood,
And blessed them anon-right;
But they spake not to the knight,
But went into the chamber anon,
And shutte the door full soon.
And anon after, therewithal,
There came a dwarf into the hall;
Four foot was the length of him,
His visage was both great and grim;
And the hair that on his head was,
It looked as yellow doth in a glass.
With milk-white lace and goodly blee,[1]
But full stoutly then looked he.
He ware a surcoat that was green,
With blaunchemeer[2] it was furred I ween.
He was well clad and well done;
As a knight's was crooked his shoen.[3]
He was large, both of foot and hand,[4]
As any man was in that land.
Sir Degoré looked on him tho,
And to him reverence did do,
And he to him would speak no word,
But made him ready to lay the borde:
He laid the cloth, and set forth bread,
And also wine, both white and red.
Torches in the hall he did light,
All thing ready to supper he dight.
And soon after, with great honour,
There came a lady out of her bower,[5]
And with her came maidens fifteen,
Some in red, and some in green.
Sir Degoré followed anon-right;
And nought she spoke unto the knight,
But yede and washed everychone,
And to supper gan they gone.
The lady was fair and bright;
In the midst of the des she sat down right;
On every side sat maidens five,
Fair and goodly, as any was alive.

[1] untenance. [2] Black and white fur, *blanche et nere* (*noire*).
[3] ese shoes, which became fashionable in the reign of Edward II., o point out the date of the original romance.
[4] believe that these phrases mean that the dwarf was "liberal and ous." [5] Chamber.

[illegible] he had not leisure [illegible] most beautiful face th[illegible] [illegible] to the gen[illegible] [illegible] amusement. [illegible] and her damsel [illegible] "Truly," [illegible] that lady [illegible] to [illegible] With thes[illegible] [illegible] her c[illegible] [illegible] Sir Degore [illegible] the harp, w[illegible] [illegible] that he [illegible] [illegible] that in a few [illegible] [illegible] her a[illegible] [illegible] and he [illegible] [illegible] she retur[illegible] [illegible] and she [illegible] [illegible] he had shown h[illegible] [illegible] as he [illegible] [illegible] during the night [illegible] [illegible] she reason[illegible] [illegible] his innocent [illegible] [illegible] his father abandoned [illegible] [illegible] as it was [illegible] [illegible] "My father," [illegible] [illegible] he [illegible] with some [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of whom [illegible] [illegible] his most exce[illegible]

tress having readily promised to bestow on him her hand and fortune whenever it should suit his convenience to claim them.

Very fortunately for the completion of the knight's projects, the monster made his appearance below the castle walls at the close of this conversation. Sir Degoré hastily put on his armour, mounted his horse, caused the drawbridge to be lowered, and, having crossed it, rode at full speed to meet his rival. But as this was the first giant whom he had ever encountered, he had not properly estimated the advantage which the monster derived from his enormous mass. The lances of both champions were shivered; but the horse of Sir Degoré had his back broken by the shock, and his rider came to the ground. The giant dismounted to continue the combat on foot; but neither the thickness of his helmet, nor that of his skull, could long resist the edge of the pointless sword urged by the arm of Sir Degoré, who was fighting in sight of his mistress, and moreover was in a great hurry to go in quest of his father. The lady had soon the pleasure of seeing the giant's vere ugly head divided from his awkward shoulders, and

> She was as glad of that sight
> As ever was bird of day-light.

A few minutes brought her into the arms of her new lover, whom she reconducted in triumph to the castle; but the knight, being now freed from all uneasiness on her account, became impatient to fulfil the act of duty which he had undertaken, and promising to return at the expiration of a year, recommended her to Heaven, and departed on his quest.

Continuing to travel in a western direction through the forest, he arrived, "after many a long journée," in a cultivated country, and soon beheld a knight in complete armour, but with his vizor closed, advancing toward him. His shield was of gold and azure;

> Three boars' heads were therein,
> The which were of gold fine,
> As soon as ever he saw that knight,
> He spake to him anon-right,
> And said, "Vilayne! what dost thou here
> In my forest, to slay my deer?"
> Sir Degoré said, with wordes meek,
> "Sir, of thy deer I take no kepe;
> For I am an aventurous knight,
> That goeth to seek war and fight."

The unknown knight replied, that he had been so lucky as to meet with his match, and desiring him to arm, waited in silence for the encounter.

All being ready, they exchanged the usual defiance, took their ground, couched their lances, and rushed together with such violence that both their horses were killed by the shock. They then

"Sir," he said, "in England
A king's daughter is my n
But I wot not who is my f
"What is thy name?" then
"Sir, my name is Degoré."
"Sir Degoré! thou art welc
For well I wot thou art m
By this sword I know thee
The point is in my pauten

The father and son, equally rejoiced a diately began their journey towards Engla travelling together could not be stopped stacle, they at length arrived after a ver palace of the old king, who was rejoice Degoré, and still more rejoiced at finding t powerful and formidable champion. T married to her unceremonious lover; and whole party repaired to the castle in the fo was solemnly united to his amiable mistre

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ROSWAL AND LIL

Concerning this romance, which, it is said, within these few years, a high degree of popu obtained no information; and have only seen a was kindly communicated to me by Mr. Dem

has not thought it necessary to mention, but whom he represents as a most suspicious tyrant and unnatural father. By his queen Lillian he had a son named Roswal, a paragon of beauty and of valour.

Princes to him was no compare,
Wight Hannibal, or Grandefare.

There were also in the king's dominions three lords "of noble worth," whom their sovereign, in consequence of their having opposed his authority, had doomed to perpetual imprisonment, and who, after many years of bondage, continued to languish in the dungeons of the palace. Roswal, whose boyish amusements had been often disturbed by the groans of these unfortunate men, generously determined, at the risk of provoking his father's utmost indignation, to liberate them from confinement; and having found that the keys of the prison were placed, at night, under the king's pillow, very dexterously contrived to withdraw them; and, after dismissing the three prisoners, restored the keys to their place without having at all disturbed his majesty's slumber.

On the following day the gaolers, having repaired to the prison with the usual pittance of provisions, were not a little astonished at finding the cell unoccupied, and immediately hastened to their master with the wonderful intelligence. The king was so much incensed, that he solemnly swore to sacrifice the life of the person who had ventured to preserve his intended victims from the effects of his vengeance, even though it should appear that his son Roswal had been implicated in the guilt; but, as the keys had been purloined by the prince without the participation of any accomplice, his delinqeuncy could not have been proved; and the escape of the prisoners might have been attributed to the miraculous interposition of Heaven, if Roswal had not voluntarily confessed himself guilty. Neither the tears of the queen, nor commiseration for his son's youth, could induce the king to recall his vow; but he was at length persuaded to commute the sentence, and to banish the boy; who was immediately sent off to the court of the king of Bealm, attended only by the high steward, an officer whose natural moroseness of temper had singularly charmed his worthy master.

The prospect of a long exile is not very cheerful. Roswal, indeed, had the consolation of reflecting that he was the victim of his generosity; and that he had purchased, though at a high price, the life and liberty of three prisoners: but the steward, who was still young, and much attached to the pleasures of the court of Naples, had no compensation for his disappointments. He therefore began his journey in more than usual ill-humour, occupied solely by the project of teasing his companion, till a more pleasing scheme occurred to him, by which he hoped to indemnify himself, at the prince's expense, for his present mortification.

He had observed that the king, at parting, had supplied his son

"Sir," he said, "in Englas
A king's daughter is my
But I wot not who is my
"What is thy name?" tha
"Sir, my name is Degoré."
"Sir Degoré! thou art wel
For well I wot thou art a
By this sword I know tha
The point is in my pauter

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Princes to him was no compare,
Wight Hannibal, or Grandefare.

There were also in the king's dominions three lords "of noble worth," whom their sovereign, in consequence of their having opposed his authority, had doomed to perpetual imprisonment, and who, after many years of bondage, continued to languish in the dungeons of the palace. Roswal, whose lavish amusements had been often disturbed by the groans of these unfortunate men, generously determined, at the risk of provoking his father's wrath indignation, to liberate them from confinement; and having found that the keys of the prison were placed, at night, under the king's pillow, very dexterously contrived to withdraw them; and, after dismissing the three prisoners, restored the keys to their place without having at all disturbed his majesty's slumber.

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Where was thou born
"Sir," he said, "in En
A king's daughter is
But I wot not who is
"What is thy name?"
"Sir, my name is Degor
"Sir Degoré! thou art
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drew their swords, and continued the combat on foot with such fury, but at the same time with so much skill and address, that, though neither was able to wound his antagonist, both found themselves so exhausted as to be very anxious for a moment's respite, that they might raise their vizors and take breath. The unknown knight spoke first:

"Abide a while, thou gentil knight!
Where was thou born, and in what land?"
"Sir," he said, "in England.
A king's daughter is my mother,
But I wot not who is my father."
"What is thy name?" then said he.
"Sir, my name is Degoré."
"Sir Degoré! thou art welcome!
For well I wot thou art my son.
By this sword I know thee here;
The point is in my pautenere."[1]

The father and son, equally rejoiced at this discovery, immediately began their journey towards England; and as two knights travelling together could not be stopped by any imaginable obstacle, they at length arrived after a very tedious ride, at the palace of the old king, who was rejoiced to see his grandson Degoré, and still more rejoiced at finding that he was the son of a powerful and formidable champion. The princess was now married to her unceremonious lover; and after their nuptials the whole party repaired to the castle in the forest, where Sir Degoré was solemnly united to his amiable mistress.

ROSWAL AND LILLIAN.

Concerning this romance, which, it is said, continued to enjoy, till within these few years, a high degree of popularity in Scotland, I have obtained no information; and have only seen a single copy of it, which was kindly communicated to me by Mr. Douce. This is printed, but without date or printer's name, and appears to have issued from some provincial press about eighty or ninety years ago. It is in the Scottish dialect. The style has, perhaps, been modernized, and the tale seems to have been awkwardly and carelessly abridged, unless we suppose it to have been printed from a mutilated and imperfect MS. There is, I think, no internal evidence to justify our ascribing its original to an earlier period than the middle of the sixteenth century.

THERE was once at Naples a *worthy* king, whose name the author

[1] A purse or pocket. Halliwell's Dictionary, p. 669

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with the usual credentials to the court of Bealm, where his person was totally unknown; and had bestowed on him money and jewels sufficient to support him during a year in a manner suitable to his rank: he therefore thought that, by appropriating to himself these credentials and this treasure, he might easily personate the heir of Naples, and thus attain a degree of power and dignity to which he had no natural pretensions. Full of this project, he watched for a favourable opportunity to execute it; and, while the prince, almost fainting with heat and fatigue, stooped from the bank of a river to catch some water in the hollow of his hands, suddenly seized his legs, and with horrid imprecations threatened to plunge him headlong into the torrent, unless he consented instantly to deliver up the money and letters with which he was charged; and moreover promised, on his word of honour, to conceal from all mankind this nefarious transaction. Roswal, unable to resist, readily submitted to these hard conditions; and the steward, setting spurs to his horse, disappeared in an instant.

The young and healthy soon forget their misfortunes. Roswal, therefore, though sufficiently unhappy at first, because he was tired and hungry, had no sooner gained admission to a hospitable cottage, occupied by a very good-natured and talkative old woman, than he became tolerably recociled to this second calamity.

She speer'd[1] his name:—"I came from far!
My name is called Dissawar."
"Oh, Dissawar, you shall not be,
For you shall have good help of me."

She perceived at first sight that he was very handsome; and as she thought her son also very handsome, she was soon of opinion that the prince was very like her son, and, to reward him for the resemblance, determined to send them to school together. Here, as he knew more than the village school-master, he passed for a prodigy. The high steward of Bealm, having heard of his talents, took him as his page, and carried him to court, where he had no sooner appeared than the king's daughter appointed him her cup-bearer. The old woman was inconsolable for the loss of her adopted child; and even the steward was very sorry to part with a page who, in the course of a few days' service, had made a great progress in his affections: but Lillian, who was an accurate discerner of merit, and most enthusiastic in her admiration of it, lost no time in bestowing her whole heart on the young cup-bearer, and as she was much prettier than the old woman, Roswal was evidently a gainer by the transfer of his services from the cottage to the court.

In the mean time the supposed heir of Naples had not lost his time. Though he had failed to captivate the heart of Lillian, he

[1] Asked.

had most successfully paid his court to the king her father, who had promised him her hand; and a solemn embassy, sent for the purpose of demanding the consent of the king of Naples to the match, was already on the road to that country, when Dissawar, rather unexpectedly, made his appearance in the palace of Bealm, in the character of cup-bearer to the princess. The pretended prince, however, was not disconcerted: he trusted to the solemn promise by which his rival was bound to secrecy, and waited, full of confidence, for the return of the embassy, by which he hoped to receive the ratification of the marriage. Nor was he disappointed. Dissawar continued true to his engagements; and the king and queen of Naples dismissed the ambassadors with magnificent presents, and with directions to hasten as much as possible the solemnization of the nuptials, which were therefore fixed for an early day, orders being at the same time issued for the celebration of a tournament in honour of the bride.

While the court of Bealm anticipated with transport the approaching festivities, Lillian alone was plunged in despair. Dissawar possessed her whole affections; but his inexplicable character was a principal source of her misery. She was convinced that, because she loved him, he must be nobly born; and frequently urged him to gratify her curiosity, by explaining the mystery, which was certainly concealed under his inauspicious appellation: but though always tender, and full of respect and gratitude, he could not be induced to reveal his secret. As the tournament approached he became more silent and melancholy; Lillian conjured him to enter the lists, and to try the only possible chance of rescuing her from the arms of a man whom she abhorred; but he declared himself utterly ignorant of all knightly exercises, and unqualified to merit by deeds in arms the kindness which she was pleased to bestow on him.

On the first morning of the festival, determined not to behold the triumph of his enemy, he rose with the dawn, and followed by his hounds repaired to the forest. But the chase could not occupy his attention. He sat musing on his horse, when he was suddenly accosted by a venerable stranger, dressed as a knight, and leading a white war-horse, on whose saddle was suspended a suit of appropriate armour. "Prince," said the gray-headed knight, "mount this horse, and clad in these arms repair to the tournament. At thy return thou shalt find me here. I will hunt thy hounds, and present to thee the game which they shall have taken." Dissawar obeyed in silence, bowed to his unknown monitor, set spurs to his horse, entered the barriers, overset all who opposed him, without having once broken his spear, began to charge the steward at full speed,—but, seeing him motionless with fear and astonishment, suddenly checked the horse in the midst of his career, saluted the company, turned round and vanished like a

meteor. The king of Bealm exclaimed, with an air of transport, that he would give an earldom to be acquainted with the unknown knight; and all the courtiers who were mounted dispersed in quest of the stranger. But it was too late. Dissawar, unarmed, and loaded with venison, was already returned to the palace.

Lillian was disposed to be very angry with her lover for amusing himself with the chace whilst her happiness was so seriously at stake; but she had no leisure to reproach him, because the remainder of the day was scarcely long enough for the narrative of what had passed during his absence. She never thought that she had expatiated sufficiently on the valour of the stranger, and on the humiliation of her intended husband; but at length she closed her story, after requesting Dissawar to attend her to the spectacle of the following day. He bowed, but made no promise; being very anxious to know whether the forest contained any more knights who were acquainted with his story, and disposed to provide him with excellent horses and armour of proof. His first benefactor, he was very sure, was no spirit of the woods, but a very substantial old gentleman, and an excellent hunter. Perhaps there might be more persons of a similar disposition in the same forest.

He was not disappointed. A second knight, dressed like the former, and leading a gray-horse, accosted him by his name, and ordered him into the lists. The steward, rejoiced that the vile white knight had not thought fit to appear, hastened to meet this new adversary, and was rewarded for his haste by such a fall that he lay senseless on the ground amidst a crowd of rivals, all of whom were unhorsed with the same facility by the terrible stranger. Dissawar, however, was as punctual as before, to the great astonishment of Lillian, whose penetrating eyes had discovered in the unknown knight a strong resemblance to her lover, but who could not account for his being able to present her with a large supply of newly-killed venison, if, as she supposed, he had been the principal actor in the tournament.

On the third day he was supplied, in a similar manner, with a bay horse, a red shield, green armour, and a golden helmet; gave the steward a second fall, by which he broke two of his ribs, bore down all the other competitors, cast a gold ring into his mistress's lap, and rode at full speed into the forest. Here he found all his three benefactors, who now informed him that they were his own subjects, and the very persons whom he had so generously rescued from prison. They told him that they were well aware of all that he had suffered for their sake, and promised their further assistance, assuring him that the steward should not much longer prevent his union with Lillian. Thus encouraged, he repaired to the palace, and encountered, without much alarm, the tender reproaches of his mistress, who was now reduced to absolute

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So Roswal and Lillian sheen
Lived many years in good liking.
I pray to Jesus, heaven's king,
To grant us heaven to our ending.
Of them I have no more to say:
God send them rest until doom's-day!

AMYS AND AMYLION.

These worthy knights were the Pylades and Orestes of the feudal ages. Their story, it may be presumed, was translated from the French;[1] though the translator uniformly refers to the *Gest*, which, I believe, usually means a Latin original. Our English version is very ancient, since a copy of it is preserved in the Auchinleck MS.; but the following abstract was taken from a MS. in the collection of Mr. Douce. It is a romance of considerable length, containing 399 stanzas, of six lines each.[2]

THERE were once two knights in Lombardy, who having been friends from their childhood, and being possessed of two adjoining domains, retired about the same time to their respective castles. Each had married, before his retreat, the lady of his affections; and it happened, by a singular coincidence, that both their wives were on the same day delivered of sons, one of which was christened by the name of Amys, the other by that of Amylion. These children, of course, became play-fellows from their infancy; both were healthy, beautiful, and active; their persons and faces were nearly similar; and this resemblance increased to such an astonishing degree, that, when they had attained twelve years of age, it was become almost impossible to distinguish the one from the other.

The duke of Lombardy about this time proclaimed a solemn festival, which was attended by all his vassals, and amongst the rest by the two knights, who carried with them the children for the purpose of initiating them in the arts of courtesy. The duke, much amused by the little mistakes which the wonderful resemblance of the two boys daily produced, insensibly became attached to them, and, when their fathers proposed to leave the court, requested that they would intrust him with their future education, assuring them that the two playmates should not be separated, but fostered together under his eye; and that both, when of a proper age, should be invested with suitable offices, and admitted,

[1] Copies of the Anglo-Norman romance are preserved at Cambridge and in the British Museum.

[2] Printed in Weber's Metrical Romances, 1810.

at his expense and by his hands, to the dignity of knighthood. The offer was too advantageous to be refused, and the knights retired, after expressing their gratitude.

Living at the same court, receiving the same instructions, sharing the same amusements, the two friends became attached to each other no less by habit than by inclination; and, wishing, with the enthusiasm so common at their age, to strengthen their union by every possible tie, reciprocally took the oaths by which they became *brothers in arms;* a contract not less holy or less indissoluble than that of marriage between the sexes, and which, identifying as it were the two parties, obliged each to adopt, without hesitation, the resentments or affections of the other, and to hazard life, and even reputation itself, in his service. Their skill in hunting, an exercise considered rather as the occupation and business than as the mere amusement of the great, and their address in all martial occupations, gave them an extensive reputation, and flattered the pride, while it conciliated the affection, of the duke their master; who, having proclaimed a tournament for the purpose of exhibiting their superiority, rewarded their success by investing them with the order of chivalry, and by appointing Sir Amys to the office of his butler, and Sir Amylion to that of steward to the household; a nomination which gave universal satisfaction, but which awakened the envy of the chief steward, a man of a most malicious character, whose hatred of the young friends produced, as we shall see in the sequel of the story, a long series of misfortunes.

Soon after this event, Sir Amylion received information of the death of his father and mother, and learnt from the messenger that his presence was loudly called for by his vassals. He was therefore under the necessity of quitting his benefactor, and of separating himself from the friend of his childhood; but, before his departure, he caused two cups of gold to be made, of exquisite workmanship, and exactly similar; one of which he proposed to retain, and destined the other for his brother in arms, as a token of their pure and perfect friendship, and a type of their astonishing resemblance. He then took leave of the duke, who sincerely regretted his loss, and quitted the court, accompanied, during a part of the way, by Sir Amys, who wished to protract as long as possible the moment which was to sever him, perhaps for ever, from his earliest and dearest companion. That moment, however, soon arrived, and after many tears and embraces Sir Amylion solemnly exclaimed,

"Fro this day forward, ever mo
Neither fail, either for weal or wo,
To helpe other at nede!
Brother! be now true to me,
And I shall be as true to thee;
As wise God me speed!"

He then gave him some good advice respecting his future conduct, recommending unshaken fidelity to his lord, and constant caution against the machinations of the wicked steward; and, after leaving with him the golden cup, continued his journey. His timely arrival put an end to all projects of disputing the succession; and having settled his affairs, he shortly after married a beautiful wife, in whose society and affection he hoped to find an indemnification for the loss of his friend and brother.

In the mean time Sir Amys returned to court, where the steward, from whatever cause, deceived him with every appearance of kindness, and solicited to be admitted into the same sacred contract which had united him with Amylion; but the young knight having civilly rejected his overtures, alleging that his oaths absolutely precluded him from forming any new engagement, he suddenly threw off the mask.

The fell steward, there he stood,
Almost for wrath he wex wode;[1]
And said, without delay,
And swore, by him that died on rood,
"Thou traitour; thou wicked blood!
Thou wilt abye this day!
I warne thee," he said than,
"For I am thy strong foe-man,
By night and by day!"
Sir Amys answered tho,
"I give thee thereof not one sloe![2]
Do right all that thou may!"

The disputants then parted; Sir Amys boiling with wrath, which however soon evaporated: while the steward calculated in silence the most effectual means of producing, with the least possible danger to himself, the destruction of his young enemy.

The duke had an only daughter, whose name was Belisante. She had now attained her fifteenth year; was adored by the duchess, and tenderly beloved by her father, who, that he might give greater splendour to her introduction into the world, proclaimed a festival, which lasted fourteen days, and brought together all the nobility of the adjoining country. Though the duke still thought her too young to behold the tournaments, she thought herself quite old enough for a lover; and, having questioned her maidens concerning the merit of the several knights who had disputed the prize, was informed that Sir Amys, whose praises she had been accustomed to hear from her tenderest infancy, was still admitted to be perfect and peerless both in valour and in courtesy. Belisante therefore *laid her heart* on Sir Amys; became very sick from sorrow and from *love-longing*, took to her bed, and determined to seize the first opportunity of explaining to

[1] Became mad. [2] I care not a sloe about it.

ver her wishes, as well as of gratifying his, if he should her the proposal.

Amys, in the mean time, was perfectly unprepared for, and ighly indifferent to, the happiness which awaited him. Ac- ned to consider the daughter of his benefactor as a beautiful prightly child, he had neglected to remark the degree to her charms were matured; and, far from suspecting that esent ailment was the result of unsatisfied love, far less that s the cause of her indisposition, contented himself with the sion that it was not dangerous; since her father, by whom as tenderly loved, did not abstain on her account from the amusements of the chase. From these amusements, how- ie was himself debarred by an accidental illness; and, during nvalescence, took delight in breathing a cooler and purer air e shady gardens of the palace, where it is probable that he ; have recovered his health without further inconvenience ot the duchess, by an unfortunate fatality, proposed the same ly to her daughter.

She said "Daughter, for love mine,
Will we wende into the gardyne,
This ilke summer's day?
There we may hear the fowles' song;
For joy, and much mirthes among,
Thy care shall all away."
Up arose that bird[1] bright,
Into the garden she wente right
With maidens hend and free:
That summer's day was fair and bright:
The sun shone thorough leme[2] of light,
Merry it was to see.
There heard they fowles great and smale,
The notes of the nightingale,
Merry singing on tree:
But her was so hard y-wrought,
On love-longing was all her thought,
Neither on game ne glee.
Thus the maiden, in that tide,
Walked under the orchard side
To slak[3] her of her care:
Then she saw Sir Amys beside;
Under a bough he gan abide,
To hear mirthes mare.

e young lady immediately seized the opportunity which For- presented to her; and, ordering her attendants to retire to distance, approached the knight, who, on his part, rose to her. She then took a seat by his side, and with very little

[1] Young lady. [2] Brightness, Sax. [3] Ease.

preface requested him to become her *leman*, assuring him that his refusal would infallibly kill her on the spot.

"Thou art," she said, "a gentyl knight,
And I, a bird in bower bright,
And of high kin y-coren;[1]
Both by day and by night
My love is on thee a-light,
My wit is nigh forloren.
Plight me thy truth, thou shalt be true,
And never change for no new
That in this world is born.
And I shall pledge my truth also
Till God and Death part us a-two
I shall not be forsworn."
That hende knight stille stood;
For that he changed all his mood,
And said, with wordes free,
"Madame! for him that died on rood!
As thou art of gentil blood,
And heir of this land shalt be,
Think all on thy much honour!
No kynge's son, no emperour,
Were not too good for thee:
Certes, then, were it unright
Thy love to lay upon a knight,
That hath nother land ne fee!"
That merry maiden of great renoun
Answered, "Why had not thou a crown?[2]
For Him that bought thee dear,
Whether art thou priest or chanoun?
Other, art thou monk, or persoun,
That preachest me thus here?
Thou should have been made no knight
To go among ladies bright;
Thou should have been a frere!
He that taught thee to preach,
To the devil of hell I him beteche;[3]
My brother though he were!
For by Him that all this world hath bought,
All this preaching helpeth thee nought,
Stand thou never so long!
But thou graunte me thy thought,
My love shall be well dear y-bought
With pains hard and strong.

[1] Choice, worthy, &c. Sax.
[2] She means the circle of hair produced by ecclesiastical tonsure.
[3] Deliver.

My kerchiefs and my clothes each one
I shall to rend them anon,
And sayen, with much wrong
That thou hast me all to-draw;
Then shalt thou, with londes law,
Be deemed well high to hong!"

Sir Amys listened with some alarm and much astonishment to this torrent of passion. The gentle Belisante, since her escape from the nursery, had made such a wonderful progress in eloquence, that he was much at a loss for an answer; and fearing that by incensing her too far, he might induce her to carry her threats into execution, he thought it advisable to give her time for recollection, and therefore solemnly promised to comply with her request, if after eight days she should still persist in the same resolution. The young lady acceded to this contract; ratified it with a very tender kiss, and gaily returned to her chamber, leaving Sir Amys to prepare for the return of the duke, who was not a little delighted by finding that his sick daughter was now perfectly recovered, insomuch that neither her person nor her manner exhibited the slightest traces of her late indisposition.

The crafty steward, it may be supposed, was not the last to observe or to comment on this very material alteration. It did not escape him that the eyes of Belisante were constantly fixed on Sir Amys; and as their language was perfectly intelligible, he suspected that she only waited for the absence of her father to throw herself into the arms of her lover; and determined, if possible, to verify his suspicions by becoming a concealed spectator of their next interview. In fact, the young lady kept a very exact reckoning of the eight days, during which she had consented to delay the accomplishment of her wishes; and as a hunting-party most fortunately took place at the expiration of the period, she punctually repaired to the knight's apartment, and summoned him to perform his promise. The steward was not less punctual at his place of concealment, from whence he could see and hear all that passed; and, after witnessing on the part of Sir Amys a degree of reluctance which his youth and the beauty of his mistress rendered rather extraordinary, had at length the satisfaction of seeing him yield to the temptation, and hastened to relate the anecdote to the duke on his arrival.

Sir Amys, perfectly unconscious of this treachey, was at his post in the hall of the palace, when he found himself suddenly assaulted by his master with a drawn sword, and had scarcely time to make his retreat into another chamber, the door of which fortunately arrested the duke's weapon, and thus enabled him to hold a parley with his assailant, from whom he learnt, with some difficulty, the cause of this sudden storm of indignation. He had no resource but to deny the fact, which he did so stoutly, offering

to prove his innocence by single combat, that the duke ordered the steward to take up the knight's gage, and appointed that day fortnight for the decision of the quarrel. Still, however, it was necessary to find *borrowes* (pledges) for the knight's appearance; and as the power and interest of his adversary intimidated all his friends at court, he was on the point of being ordered into confinement, when the fearless Belisante exclaimed,

——"That would be much wrong!
Take my body for the knight,
Tyl the day be come of fight,
And doth me in prison strong!
Gif that knight flee away,
And dare not uphold his day,
Batell of him to fong,
Dampneth[1] me, with landes law,
For his love to brenne and to drawe,
And high on galowes to hong!"
Then spoke her mother wordes bold,
And said, gladly that she wold
Be his borowe right also,
That he, as a good knight sholde
That day of batayle upholde,
To fight with his foe.

Two such pledges being unexceptionable, he was left perfectly at large, it being only required that he should make his appearance on the day of combat.

It was with no small surprise that the fair Belisante beheld the gloom which still continued to overspread the brow of the intrepid but conscientious Sir Amys. She represented to him the numberless crimes of the steward, recalled to his memory his own brilliant exploits, and promised him a suit of armour, of such excellent proof that it might insure the success of a far meaner champion: but he answered, with an air of despondence.

"I have the wrong and he the right,
Therefore I am afear'd to fight,
As God mote me speed!
For I mote swear, withouten fail,
As God me speed, in my batayl,
That it is falsehede;[2]
And if I swear, I am forsworn;
Life and soul I am forlorn!
Certes, I can no rede!"

To these scruples even the logic of the fair Belisante could not oppose any satisfactory answer; but Sir Amys having at length observed that his brother in arms, if apprised of his situation, would, doubtless, assist him, and take the battle against the steward,

[1] Condemn. [2] Treachery.

tho two ladies immediately conjured him to lose no time, but to set off next morning in quest of Sir Amylion.

The knight obeyed; but, listening only to his impatience, hastened forward with such inconsiderate speed that his horse, after performing something more than half the journey, fell dead with fatigue and hunger. Sir Amys proceeded on foot, and reached at length a forest, distant only a few leagues from his friend's habitation. But here it became impossible to resist any longer the attacks of sleep: he threw himself on the grass, and quietly resigned himself to rest. Luckily Sir Amylion, who had retired to bed at an early hour, was much disturbed by a dream, which represented his friend as surrounded by wild beasts, and on the point of being devoured, and, finding that the vision persisted in persecuting him, suddenly rose, ordered his horse, and, without any attendants rode into the forest.

All night he rode, till it was day,
Till he came there Sir Amys lay
Into the forest wide;
Then saw he a weary man forgone,
Lying under a tree; anon
To him he gan ride.
When he came to him full right,
"Arise, fellow; it is light,
"And time for to go:"
Sir Amys bray'd up with his sight,[1]
And soon he knew that gentle knight,
And he did him also.

The two friends now sat down together, and Sir Amys related from beginning to end the history of his amour, and the treachery of the steward, adding that he was very little solicitous about his own life, but wished, if it were possible, to save those of Belisante and the duchess, though he foresaw that this could not be done without the assistance of his brother, since it could not be expected that heaven should permit him to gain the victory, after perjuring himself in a solemn appeal to the justice of his Creator. Sir Amylion listened to the tale with much regret, lamented the impetuous affection of Belisante, execrated the perfidy of the steward, and finally determined to take the battle on himself. "You," said he, "must personate me during my absence, and say that you have sent off your horse to Sir Amys. We will exchange dresses, and I hope to be in time to save the life of your leman, and to punish our common enemy. Our perfect resemblance will insure the success of our project, and deceive all eyes, even those of my wife, whom I must commit during a few days to your discretion." After these words they embraced and separated.

[1] Started, and raised his eyes.

The supposed Amylion proceeded on foot to the castle, and, having told a very plausible story respecting the horse,

Little and much, less and mare,
And all that ever in court were
Weened it had been so.
And when y-comen was the night,
Sir Amys, and the lady bright,
To bed gan they go:
And when they weren in bed laid,
Sir Amys his sword out-brayed,
And held it between hem two.[1]

The lady, we may presume, was a good deal surprised, and perhaps startled at the introduction of this third inmate of her bed: but her supposed husband informed her that he found himself indisposed, and, apprehending that his fever might be infectious, had adopted this precaution for her security. This excuse satisfied her, and they continued to live on a footing of the greatest cordiality.

In the mean time, though Sir Amylion had used the utmost expedition, the day appointed for the battle arrived: the steward entered the lists, and, not meeting his expected adversary, loudly proclaimed that the traitor Sir Amys had fled into a distant country, and required that, according to the law held in such cases, his two pledges should be produced in his stead, and publicly burned. The duke, however reluctant, was compelled to issue this dreadful order, which, however, the officers who received it were in no haste to execute; so that while the fire was kindling, and the two ladies, who now began to despair of their deliverance, were approaching the place of execution, the knight appeared; and, riding up to the duke, whom he tauntingly reprimanded for his "unkindness" in wishing "to make roast of ladies bright," procured their immediate liberty. He then retired with them to be armed.

And richely they gan him schrede,[2]
With helm and plate and worthy weed;
His 'tire it was full gay.
And when he was on his steed,
That God Almighty should him speed
Many man bade that day,

[1] A similar incident occurs in Sir Tristram, whom King Mark discovers lying by Ysoude, with a drawn sword between them; upon which he remarks:

"Gif they weren in sinne,
Nought so they no lay:"

See also Sir W. Scott's note on the passage, p. 325. The idea is of Oriental origin, and a like scene will occur to every one who remembers (and who does not?) the tale of Aladdin. [2] Shroud, i. e. dress.

And as he rode out of the town,
A voice there come fro heaven adown,
That no man heard but he:
And said, "Knight! Syr Amylion!
God, that suffred passion,
Sent thee word by me!
Gif thou this battle underfong,
Thou shalt have aventures strong,
Within these yeares three;
Ere then the three years ben agone,
A fouler man was never none,
Certes, than thou shalt be.
But, for thou art hend and free,
Jesu thee sent word by me
To warne thee anon:
A more wrethe than thou shalt be,
In care, in sorrow, and poverté,
Was never man worse begone.
In all thy londe good and hende
They that are thy beste friende,
Shall be thy moste foen:
And thy wife, and all thy kin,
Shall shun the stead that thou art in,
And forsake thee everihcon."
The hende knight stood still as stone,
And heard these wordes everichon,
That were so hard and grylle:[1]
He wist not what was best to don;
To flie, or to battell gon;
In heart he liked ill!
He thought, "If I be known by name,
Then shall my brother go to shame;
With spite they wil him spill!
Certes," he said, "for dread of care,
To save my truth I will not spare!
Let God do all his will!"

aving formed this generous resolution, he spurred forward to lists: and, having sworn, in apparent contradiction to the ard's allegation, "that he had never received any favours . Belisante," began the mortal combat; in which, after re- ng a dangerous wound in the shoulder, he at length pierced dversary to the heart, and, having cut off his head, presented the duke as an undeniable proof of his daughter's innocence. delighted father rewarded him on the spot, by promising before all his barons, the possession of her hand, and the ession to the kingdom; and the supposed Sir Amys, now

[1] Sharp.

become the universal favourite, made a triumphant entry into the palace, where the best leeches that Italy could afford were summoned to dress his wounds. Their report was favourable; and though his shoulder, in spite of their skill, continued to give him pain, he was soon enabled to take his leave of the ladies, and to undertake his journey to rejoin Sir Amys, who had daily visited the appointed spot in the forest in hopes of meeting him. The joy of both was, as may be supposed, excessive. Sir Amys, on his return, was publicly married to the fair Belisante; and the death of the duke and of the duchess, shortly after, put him in possession of his inheritance, and placed him amongst the most powerful princes of Italy. To complete his happiness, he became, in the first two years of his marriage, the father of two beautiful children; and his mistress, perfectly cured of that petulance and vivacity of character which had occasioned so much guilt and misery, became the gentlest and most affectionate of wives.

We must now return to Sir Amylion, who, having once more resumed his own character, returned to his castle, glowing with delight at having established for ever the fortunes and happiness of his friend; but occasionally reflecting with some uneasiness on the mysterious threatenings of the angel. But every melancholy reflection was lost in the pleasure of revisiting his wife, whom he loved with the most ardent fondness. At night, of course, the sword was forgotten, and the lady was much pleased at the omission; but she could not forbear from inquiring why he had thought fit during a whole fortnight, to persevere in a ceremony which she was disposed to think very foolish and unnecessary. Amylion, to whom this information was quite new, and to whom it afforded an equivocal proof of his friend's delicate sense of honour, had no answer ready; and, without considering the possible inconvenience of such a confession, frankly told her the whole story. The lady received it with indignation and disgust. She disdained to reproach him with having placed her, without her knowledge or consent, in a most awkward predicament with Sir Amys, but vented her fury on the rest of his conduct; loudly declaring that his friend had deserved to die; that his profligate mistress merited the severest punishment; and that the steward, whom he had cruelly slain, was the only person for whom she felt esteem or regret. In vain did Sir Amylion attempt to pacify her, or to exculpate himself. Every hour added to her rage, which settled into the most mortal aversion; and this, it may be supposed, was not diminished by the effect of a hideous leprosy, which, as the angel had foretold, rendered him an object of loathing to all his acquaintance. Even his menials were unwilling to serve him, and were encouraged in their disobedience by their mistress.

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[1] Sharp.

expecting with patience a
tion.

When they heard the sou
the guests to table, and th
hall, they felt more keenly
At length a knight, accom
gate, and accidentally cast h
had he witnessed such a disg
seemed to be covered with
such manly beauty as in t
him; courteously inquired i
nite surprise that he was serv
to him to quit this degrading
the duke's court; and was s
civil but firm refusal of this in
was naturally construed by t
turned into the hall, and, la
the anecdote to Sir Amys, w
contempt, replied, that such
sently receive, an adequate re
squire, and, filling his golde
should carry that to the la
attendant.

The squire, having executed
leper draw from under his sor
bling that which he had br
most minute attention; and, l
difference, hastened with this
now started from his seat, and
must have robbed his brothe
wretch to his just resentme
instantly seized the

"He is thy brother, Sir Amylion,
That whilom was a noble baron,
Both to ride and go:
And now with sorrow is driven adown!
Now God, that suffered passion,
Bring him out of his wo!
For thee, of bliss he is bare,
And thou yieldest[1] him all with care,
And breakest his bones a-two!
That he halp at thy need
Well enow acquittest thou his meed!
Alas! why farest thou so?"

Sir Amys heard these words with the deepest contrition. He beheld, on the shoulder of the leper, the deep scar remaining from the wound inflicted by the steward; and, instantly recognising his brother, tenderly embraced him, and besought him to forgive his apparent ingratitude. He then re-entered the hall, bearing in his arms the wretch whom he had so lately vowed to destroy; and Belisante, when apprised of the story, stifling at once all emotions of horror and disgust, flew to meet and kiss her benefactor. From this moment every attention which affection could devise was employed to soften the horrors of his fate; and Sir Amylion, long accustomed to physical suffering, endured without a murmur the chastisement inflicted by Providence.

One night, as he lay in his bed, the angel appeared to him in a vision, and declared to him that "if Sir Amys, on the festival of the Nativity, which was fast approaching, would cut the throats of his two children, and anoint the leprous sores with their blood, the disease, which was incurable by all other means, would instantly disappear;" and at the same time the same intelligence was conveyed by the angelic messenger to Sir Amys. A few hours after this, the friends being met as usual, Sir Amylion could not refrain from mentioning to his brother his extraordinary dream, to which, however, as he had received his former warning when perfectly awake, he attached little importance. Sir Amys kept silence; but comparing his friend's dream with his own, was convinced that they were a warning from heaven. The feelings of a father pleaded powerful against the sacrifice; but religion, and an enthusiastic sense of gratitude to his brother, prevailed. It was the eve of the Nativity, when he had been accustomed to spend the night in prayer; but he now directed Belisante to proceed with all the family to church, declaring that he would stay at home alone for the purpose of attending on Sir Amylion. The duchess obeyed, and he was left without witnesses.

Alone himself, withouten mo,
To his own chamber he gan go,

[1] Requitest.

There his children were;
And he beheld them bothe two,
How fair they layn together tho,
And playden both in fere.
Than said he, "By Saint John,
It is great rewth you to slon,
That God had bought so dear!"
His knife he had drawen that tide;
For sorrow he stood hem beside,
And wept with rewly cheer.
And when he had wept there he stood,
Anon he turned again his mood,
Withouten more delay.
"My brother, that was true and good,
For me he shed his owne blood,
To save my life one day.
Why should I, then, my children spare,
To bring my brother out of care?
Certes, he said, nay!
My brother to helpen at this need
Jesu give me well to speed,
And Mary that best may!"
No longer he ne stente ne stood;
He drew his knife with dreary[1] mood,
His children he hent[2] tho;
And, for he would not spill her blood,
On a basyn fair and good
The throats he carfe a-two.

He then carefully replaced the children in bed, threw the clothes over them, locked the door, and concealed the key.

To his brother he wente than,
And said to the careful man,
Such time as God was born,
"I have thee brought my children's blood;
I hope it shall do thee good,
As the angel said beforn."
"Brother!" Sir Amylion gan say,
Hast thou slain thy children tway?
Alas! why didst thou so?"
He wept, and said, "Well away!
"I had liever, till doomesday,
Have lain in sorrow and wo!"
"Brother," said Sir Amys, "be still!
God may, when it is his will,

[1] Sorrowful. [2] Seized.

Send me children mo:
For me, of bliss thou art bare!
Y-wiss, my life I would not spare
To bring thee now therfro."

:h these words, he anointed Sir Amylion with the blood,
l him in his bed, directed him to go to sleep in the full con-
e of experiencing the mercy of heaven, and repaired to chapel,
, confessing his crime before the altar, he humbly implored
ideemer and the blessed Virgin to intercede for a murderer,
guilt had been produced by motives of the sincerest piety.
sante had no sooner finished her devotions than she hastened
old and embrace her children; but her attendants, having
sought for the key, returned with an air of alarm, and
ed that it was no where to be found. Sir Amys sternly
d them to depart, and, being left alone with his wife, com-
nated to her, with much agitation, the dreadful scene which
aken place during her absence. The wretched mother fainted
arms, and appeared for some time, as lifeless as her children;
n her recovery, reading in her husband's countenance the
of his heart, she suddenly resumed her courage, and exerted
f to soothe and console him, adding to the argument, which
d already used to Sir Amylion,

"And gif it were at my heart' root,
For to bring thy brother boot,
My life should I not spare!
There shall no man our children sene;
For to-morrow they shall buried ben,
As they fairly dead were."

then hurried him to the chamber of the leper; whom they
miraculously restored to his former health; and having
ly adored the inscrutable wisdom of Providence, they thought
minds sufficiently tranquil to contemplate with pious resig-
the frightful sacrifice by which they had purchased their
's recovery. They entered the fatal room; involuntarily
ered as they approached the bed; and beheld the children
wakened from a refreshing sleep, and sporting together, ut-
nconscious of the pangs which they had cost their anxious
ts, and unable to account for the flood of silent tears which
on them from the eyes of Sir Amys, while he pressed them
ately to his heart, and transferred them to the embraces of
eeping Belisante.

author, true to the principles of romance, has thought fit to
us from this striking picture to a series of events which are
t all interesting, but which he thought necessary [illegible]
se of duly rewarding the virtue of Child Oneys. T[illegible]
member that the wife of Amylion had increased,
in her power, the sufferings of her husband; tha[illegible]

husband, and was actually celeb
troops entered the hall. The
unarmed, dispersed in all direct
could; the lady was seized, and h
life; Sir Amylion formally re-ent
and, having summoned all his
oath of allegiance to Child One
Amys, whom he never more quit
many years of happiness, passed t
endowing an abbey, and in other

Both on o[1] day they
And in o grave they
These hende knig
And, for her[2] truth,
The bliss of heaven
That lasteth ever

[1] One. [2] Their.

THE END

AUG 4

insensibly possessed herself of all his inheritance; and that Sir Amys, as her suzerain, could not justly suffer her to retain a great feudal lordship and a castellated mansion. On the other hand, Sir Amylion, now in full health, had little to do; and Child Oneys was of an age to enter on the career of chivalry. Sir Amys therefore collected a body of his vassals, and began his march, accompanied by Sir Amylion and Oneys, to recover the fief. The exploit was not difficult. The lady had thought fit to select a new husband, and was actually celebrating the bridal feast when the troops entered the hall. The guests, who were numerous but unarmed, dispersed in all directions, and escaped as well as they could; the lady was seized, and kept in durance for the rest of her life; Sir Amylion formally re-entered into possession of his estates, and, having summoned all his vassals, caused them to take the oath of allegiance to Child Oneys. He then returned with Sir Amys, whom he never more quitted; and the two brothers, after many years of happiness, passed the decline of life in founding and endowing an abbey, and in other acts of charity and devotion.

Both on o[1] day they beth dead,
And in o grave they weren laid,
These hende knightes both two:
And, for her[2] truth, and her goodhede,[3]
The bliss of heaven they had to mede,
That lasteth ever mo.

[1] One. [2] Their. [3] Goodness.

THE END.

AUG 4 1918

LONDON:
PRINTED BY T. R. HARRISON, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

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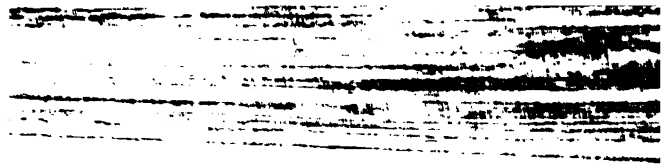

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